ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

Individualized Reading for EAP for social science first year student in Addis Ababa University: a study of a possible Approach for teaching Reading in EFL.

Gebremedhin Simeon

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Abstract

The three-semester service English courses offered by the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature, Institute of Language Studies, are meant to help all Addis Ababa University students develop their linguistic abilities so that they could successfully cope with the academic requirements of the university. The first two courses are offered in the first year and the third course in the first or second semester of the second year. Research indicates the first year courses in particular have not succeeded in helping the social science students develop their background knowledge to a significant degree to read in English for academic purposes.

Based on the current view that reading is an interactive process and that this may be facilitated if learners can develop the critical mass of knowledge which embodies knowledge of the content (or of the world), knowledge of the reading process and knowledge of English and the capacity to effectively use this competence, the current study explores the feasibility of a possible approach for reading instruction in English for academic purposes to enable students to acquire the essential mass of knowledge so that they could become fluent readers in English. The approach maintains that effective learning for attaining the essential background knowledge for developing the learner's ability to read fluently can occur when learning is individualised (to cater for learner differences in cognitive style and strategies, learning strategies, motivation and purpose of learning, and prior knowledge) and when learners get the training on learning how to learn and to take the responsibility for their learning.

Accordingly, an independent learning mode was designed in order to encourage learners to take most of the learning decisions by themselves: two sessions per week of individualised reading whereby learners selected appropriate reading materials from the *ELSIP* and *SRA* collections and were encouraged to read and focus on what each individual learner felt was his/her needs, lacks and wants; and one session per week of group discussion whereby learners shared experiences and discussed the structure and usage exercises in the Freshman English course books and were provided with some

training on learning how to learn. The study was undertaken in two phases: the pilot planned to last for a semester and the corpus for two semesters. While the pilot study involved about 120 social science first year students (or four sections: two sections were study and two sections were control), the main study included about 420 social science first year students (or thirteen sections: six sections consisting of 210 students assigned to the study group, and the remaining 210 students assigned to the control group). The mode of study continued for one semester, or about five months. At the beginning and end of the study, a test package and a questionnaire on the reading process and reading strategies were administered. The test package consisted of reading comprehension tests drawn from the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate, *First Certificate in English* (to assess the reading comprehension improvement of the study group), cloze readability tests set from the social science first year course books (to test whether students at the end of the study, due to the approach variable, have found their course books easier to read than before), and English language tests taken from the Freshman English 101A and Freshman English 101B examinations (to find out whether students in the study groups have improved in their linguistic ability). At the end of the study, the attitudes and opinions of the instructors involved were also solicited.

Despite the planned arrangement, unforseen circumstances limited the corpus study to one semester. Consequently, the pilot study was found to be essential for two fundamental reasons: firstly, the corpus study was limited to only a semester and, thus, this necessitated the use of the information compiled from the pilot study to validate the test results of the corpus study; and secondly, the pilot study indicated that most students preferred structured learning materials like the ***SRA*** reading cards to unstructured ones, such as the ***ELSIP*** materials, at the initial stages. Based on this, the corpus study started with the ***SRA*** and would have moved into the ***ELSIP*** if the study had not been discontinued at the beginning of the second semester of the 1990/91 academic year.

It was found out that the students during the pilot study and the main study appreciated the mode of learning and they liked the materials they used. They reported that they had benefitted substantially and the approach pursued helped them not only in studying English but also their other courses. The instructors corroborated the students' reactions

and recommended the adoption of this approach in the service English courses. However, during the pilot study, the results of the tests did not indicate any marked improvement in the reading ability of the students in the study group. During the main study, the cloze test results were inconclusive. The study group of the main study, however, performed significantly better than the control group in the reading comprehension post test. They also indicated a marked improvement in their reading comprehension ability at the end of the study. Moreover, it was statistically proved that the study group improved significantly in their linguistic ability at the end of the study, however, it was not possible to conclude whether they did better than the control group. Significant changes in reading habits and styles were not observed. However, it was found out that the study group performed significantly better than the control group in the 1990/91 academic year first semester Freshman English 101A final examination. It was recommended that such explicit changes could have been found to be more marked than indicated by the test results (a) if the study had continued for more than a semester, and (b) if the study had given more prominence to assessing the process than the product of language learning.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Addis Ababa University employs English as a language of instruction. Almost all course books and reference materials that are available in the university are written in English. Under normal circumstances, university students are expected to have a satisfactory command of the English language in order to undertake learning tasks that involve the use of both the language and the knowledge the students get from their reading and other sources. As Wilson (1981:31) points out about the academic requirements in institutes of higher learning in the West, it is taken for granted in Addis Ababa University that "learning tasks in arts and social sciences characteristically involve elucidation of the framework of assumptions within which different writers operate: the student is asked to examine presuppositions, compare and contrast, analyze arguments and evaluate the adequacy of interpretations of behaviour or social trends."

Moreover, it is assumed that in Addis Ababa University (section 2.5 Chapter 2 below), students in the social sciences are supposed to read intensively and extensively, to take notes from their lectures and reading, to compare and contrast ideas and to assess opinions and presuppositions. In most instances, students perform such learning tasks individually. It is assumed that lecturers 'allow' students to follow their preferred styles and strategies of learning and to pursue knowledge in a way each student *wants* and *is able to*. It is also assumed that in the social sciences, lecturers indicate to their students that there may not be only one way of looking at things, and that interpretations of phenomena may change from time to time and from individual to individual. It is taken for granted that lecturers do not take themselves as the sole source of knowledge and that students are not supposed to 'take' from this knowledge *verbatim* from their classroom lectures. In fact, research based on classroom language learning lessons indicates that

"no matter how well the teacher does his or her job, what any learner can learn from each lesson will depend on what happens in the course of the classroom interaction, and on whether or not that learner bothers to pay attention to the different learning opportunities that arise" (Allwright and Bailey 1991:22). All these classroom language learning activities depend, among other things, on what each student brings to the learning situation - both the knowledge of the process and the competence to utilize this knowledge (Garner 1987; Ellis and Sinclair 1989).

It has been pointed out that English is the medium of instruction in Addis Ababa University (section 2.2 and section 2.6 Chapter 2). Service English courses were initially introduced to last a few years to help those university entrants who needed to improve their English so that they could follow their academic courses effectively (section 2.5; Jarvis 1969). Currently, it is assumed that in order for university students to operate as students of higher learning in English, Addis Ababa University students are offered a three semesters of remedial English course as "an aid to improving the students' academic efficiency in their university studies." It is admitted that the service English course books are meant to provide "a review and revision of the ground rules of English grammar" (Conroy 1985: introduction). Apparently, this statement reflects the basis of the development of the courses and the major learning objectives of Freshman English. It is assumed that if students are taught the ground rules of English grammar, they will master the language which eventually helps them to cope with their academic requirements.

Nevertheless, current research (section 2.5 and section 2.6 Chapter 2) confirms that the assumption that the current three semesters' remedial English work would enable students to effectively pursue their academic work in English is not borne out by facts. It is common knowledge that most students cannot adequately cope with the academic demands of the university. Most students are poor readers (section 2.6 Chapter 2 below) and seem not to benefit much either from the lectures or the course books of the service English courses. In fact, it is paradoxical to learn the fact that quite a number of first year students find it difficult to pass the service English courses that are meant to help the very students thought to have difficulty in learning their academic courses. It is

alleged that most first year drop outs are likely to be those who have at least an ***F*** score in Freshman English (section 2.6 Chapter 2). Similarly, students have the 'wrong' impression, possibly encouraged to assume as such by the limited classroom learning experience they have had in schools, or probably, by the entire educational system (section 2.2, section 2.3 and section 2.4 Chapter 2), that the Freshman English course books contain all what they are *expected to learn* to pass the service English courses (section 5.2 and section 5.3 Chapter 5 below; ***Appendix 3***). It is not uncommon to observe that students treat their academic course books, including the service English course books, as consisting of most of what they are *supposed to know* and not what they may *like to know* or to learn (section 5.311 Chapter 5; ***Appendix 3.12***).

Two basic assumptions could be made about this. Firstly, students' assumptions of what they are supposed to know may not necessarily be the same as what lecturers may expect their students to know (as stipulated in the educational objectives of the university - section 2.4 Chapter 2). A problem is likely to arise when students are certain that they know what they are supposed to know and act accordingly and yet fall short of what is expected of them specially regarding the level of competence in reading in English. Secondly, as it is indicated above, students may assume that what they are supposed to know in a particular course is all what is in a given course book for that course (section 5.311 Chapter 5; ***Appendix 3.12***). It seems that this is the reason why students insist on using the only prescribed text books for the Freshman English courses, and most of them seem not to bother to develop, for instance, their linguistic ability by doing extra reading in English. Though it is not denied that there are certain things that an institution expects its students to know, such as those outlined in the form of course requirements, Addis Ababa University, by virtue of its being an institution of higher learning, is established to facilitate research and disseminate appropriate knowledge (section 2.4 Chapter 2). This requires both staff and students to look for possible sources of knowledge, to investigate, compare and contrast phenomena, to examine available information from different points of view (and not necessarily the position the course book writer wants to propagate), and more significantly, to foster independent methods of inquiry.

Various factors might have contributed to the students' poor performance in English, as

indicated above. Research undertaken at different times indicates that most students have not been successful in reading in English (Lee 1968; Langmuir 1971; Gebremedhin 1991), find their course books very difficult to read (Tsegaye 1981; Mendida 1988; ***Appendix 1.2***), and their lectures very difficult to follow (Haile Michael 1988; Hicks 1989). Most lecturers complain about their students' inability to write their assignments in correct English. They believe that their students do not read as effectively and as much as they should (***Appendix 3.2***). Despite the fact that the service English courses were introduced "to improve the students' skills in following textbooks and lectures in other subjects and to encourage thoughtful and logical expression in their second language[1]" (Mosback 1977:314) current findings indicate "that general 'backup' courses in service English are largely a waste of resources" (318).

Two points could be raised to put the issue in its right perspective. Firstly, it should be decided whether it is still necessary to keep the service English courses in the university. If it is decided that they should stay, then other ELT related questions, (such as developing appropriate course materials, selecting suitable approaches to ELT in the university, and developing ELT syllabus) can be tackled. Secondly, the service English courses should be defined in light of the present English language teaching situation (section 2.3 Chapter 2) in the schools. This entails the investigation of the general linguistic background of the students, the basic requirements of the academic courses - both systemic and schematic knowledge - and the reorganisation of the service English courses to meet individual needs. As pointed out above, language courses that do not meet these fundamental requirements are certainly a waste of manpower and resources.

As indicated above, it has now become apparent that there is a gap between students' reading ability in English and the quality and level of reading their courses and course books require. Though it is claimed that the service English courses are taught to bridge this gap, it seems, as indicated above, that they are not effective in achieving that goal

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[1]It is to be understood that English is now considered as a foreign language rather than a second language in Ethiopia despite the fact that it is used as a medium of instruction in both secondary schools and institutions of higher learning. Recent research (McNab 1989) confirms that students and teachers alike in secondary schools find it difficult to operate in English, and it is reported that in most instances, they resort to using Amharic, or the vernacular, in classroom lessons.

(section 2.6 Chapter 2). As some researchers claim, service English courses remain ineffective if they are limited to providing exercises on formal items believed to be the sources of common learner errors. In other words, "treating the advanced learner's errors through remedial teaching may be doing no more than treating the symptoms and ignoring the causes" (Ellis 1987:71). The identified gap is not likely to be bridged by remedial courses, such as the service English courses in their current format. It is argued that service English courses should be designed in a way they can promote learner involvement in the process of language learning. In other words, as Dickinson (1987:2) argues, service English courses should not be "beset by techniques in which the tail wags the dog." Learner variables should be given the priority in selecting effective techniques of developing communicative competence in order to engender independent learning. In line with the basic objectives of Addis Ababa University, they should be designed in a way they allow for the training of learners towards autonomy. It is hypothesized that learner involvement could be facilitated through individualised learning. Individualisation could allow learners to develop their language learning capacities. As it is argued (Allwright 1988), individualisation of learning is a common characteristic of language classrooms which can be exploited for the purposes of generating effective language learning. In Addis Ababa University, students are supposed to do a lot of reading in class, on their own, to take notes in class and from reference materials, and undertake independent work in pursuit of academic knowledge. Such stipulations, if realized, constitute the groundwork for individualised reading in English for academic purposes.

Researchers emphasise that effective reading is only possible when the reader has the appropriate background knowledge of the material to be read (Carrell 1987:461). Smith (1982) defines background knowledge as constituting knowledge of the world, the reading process, and knowledge of the language used. Some schema theorists assert that knowledge structures or schemata, for instance, necessary for effective reading comprehension constitute content and formal schemata (Carrell 1987) or schematic and systemic knowledge (Widdowson 1983). The former refers to the knowledge of the subject matter, and the latter to the knowledge of the language. It has been indicated above that the service English courses are meant to develop the latter on the common assumption that if one knows the language, one can read fluently (section 3.2 Chapter 3).

However, it is argued that the service English courses have not done much to help students develop their background knowledge in order to become effective readers (section 2.6, section 2.7 Chapter 2, ***Appendix 3.2***). Some researchers suggest that it would be helpful to establish whether it is a linguistic or a reading problem (Alderson 1984). At the lower levels, it is claimed that there is evidence that it is basically linguistic (section 3.2 and section 3.3 Chapter 3). Others object the idea that a threshold of language learning is essential for reading comprehension to occur. They argue that "when instructional strategies make use of their students' extra-linguistic deficiencies, readers can offset their linguistic deficiencies" (Swaffar and others 1991:57). Similarly, Bloor (1985) states that it would be misleading to assume that all native speakers are necessarily good readers in their language. Thus, though it is essential, linguistic fluency alone does not necessarily result in reading fluency in the given language. An appropriate approach[2] to help students develop their reading ability should be sought.

It is argued that the mere teaching of linguistic items, as the service English courses do, does not promote effective reading. It is apparent that students' mastery of the language and knowledge of the reading process is so low that the service English courses, at least in their present form and content, cannot substantially help students to become better readers in English for academic purposes. The courses are limited both in content and approach. Their content provides an explanation of a few selected grammatical items, assumed to cause learning difficulties, mostly with structural exercises. The courses do not provide much to help students to develop their ability in the macro-skills of listening, reading, speaking and writing. Regarding the common approach employed, in a typical Freshman English class, a teacher explains a language item (usually reads the notes provided in the prescribed course book, or does all the reading passages for students and dictates answers), asks students to do the exercises that follow and, later, provides the answers. The role of the students is usually limited to doing any assigned exercises (and they have to be assigned to do the exercises the teacher wants them to do).

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[2]Anthony (cited in Allwright and Bailey 1991:8) distinguishes the difference between *approach*, *method* and *technique*. He states that an *approach* is a philosophy of language and learning that provides the theoretical underpinnings of language teaching. A *method* is a systematic collection of activities and procedures which are derived logically from the *approach*. *Techniques* are various activities implemented during a lesson, which stem, in turn, directly from the *method* chosen.

1.11 Teacher-student roles

In a typical Freshman English class the teacher is at the centre of the teaching-learning process. He/she is the source of the necessary knowledge, asks students to do assignments and marks their work. He/she sets the parameters of 'right' and 'wrong', and the learners should follow. He/she lectures and students take down notes to be studied and, in most cases, to be provided *verbatim* as answers during examinations (for the criticism of this posture see Freire cited in Rogers 1983). As Altman (1980:8) indicates, in such a pedagogical paradigm,

> all the elements of the course are fixed and inflexible, and have been established by the teacher or textbook author with no direct knowledge of, or concern for the particular characteristics of the learners in a specific classroom. The course has been designed to cater for the learning style of a hypothetical model learner, and whatever adaptation occurs is on the part of students enroled in this course who are expected to adapt themselves as much as possible to the characteristics of the hypothetical model. Those students who are able to approximate the model stand a good chance of success. Those students whose learner characteristics deviate too drastically from the model are given little encouragement to continue. Although teachers may attempt to provide remediation for learners who cannot adapt to the model, the inherent inflexibility of this pattern ultimately dooms such learners to failure or exclusion.

It seems that it is this inherent inflexibility that makes students to believe that the service English course books are extremely essential for success in the Freshman English examinations. As indicated above, both teachers and students feel that the course books have permanence (that is, they are there to be rigidly followed without any alteration, according to official prescriptions - they indicate the syllabus, the content and the methodology to be followed), and contain all what is required to be taught and learnt for success in the language tests (***Appendix 3.12***).

This approach presupposes that the teacher knows and the students are supposed to learn what he/she willing to impart to them. It also disregards the essential contributions of the learners to the teaching-learning situation and contradicts the fact that the students' background knowledge is essential for effective language learning. It has been argued above that the development of both schematic and systemic knowledge is essential for

effective reading instruction. However, the typical service English classroom is inherently inflexible to allow favourable learning environment to enhance learner autonomy. A common argument advanced in support of the above teaching-learning paradigm is derived from the wrong conception about the relationship between learning and teaching.

1.12 Teaching-learning relationship

The basis of the service English courses seems to be that whatever is taught is learned (section 2.7 Chapter 2 and section 4.1 Chapter 4 below). Riley (1987:75) argues that "teaching and learning are separate activities and ... they are not in a cause-effect relationship; teaching does not make learning happen." Despite this, it is a common understanding among teachers and administrators that the teacher should cover all the units in the specified course books; otherwise students cannot learn them or they cannot be held responsible for learning them (section 4.1 Chapter 4). Thus, learning is defined as the mere 'mastering' of selected formal items specified in the language course books. As pointed out above, the teacher's responsibility is to teach specific language items, and the learners' task is to 'learn' them, and prove that they have learned them when they are tested. Rogers (1983) and Altman (1980) claim that this posture wrongly assumes that the teaching-learning process is circumscribed to a mechanical give-take and return activity. In simplified terms, the teacher 'gives out' items of knowledge, the student 'takes' these and returns them when the teacher wants them back. It can be said that this could be one possible reason why there is an overemphasis on covering the units in the service English course books in good time for examinations (section 4.1 Chapter 4; section 5.311 Chapter 5). Rogers (1983:120) argues that "this notion of coverage is based on the assumption that what is taught is what is learned; what is presented is what is assimilated. I know of no assumption so obviously untrue."

Learners are taken not as individuals with different learning needs, wants and lacks (as Altman 1980:11-2; Allwright 1982; Carver 1984 indicate) but as a group to take up what is taught in the same manner and depth. As indicated above, teaching is again reduced to telling. Learners are 'told' and not 'taught' (section 2.6 and section 2.7 Chapter 2,

section 3. Chapter 3). Abebe (1987) argues that 'teaching' and 'telling' are two different things, and education has nothing to do with telling. Widdowson points out that training and education are at the opposite ends of a continuum, the latter mostly concerned with, for instance, teaching language for academic purposes (1983). Education is concerned with the creation of the *whole person*, a person, as Rogers (1983) argues, who has learned how to learn.

It is a common belief that the teaching of discrete language items or structures helps learners to develop their ability to function in that language, and, subsequently, to help them become fluent readers. This belief has given rise to various attempts to simplify aspects of usage to avoid language difficulty or complexity. Freshman English course books are based on the assumption that the bulk of the language lesson should be devoted to expounding aspects of usage and not use (section 2.3 and section 2.5 Chapter 2). As Widdowson (1990:113) points out

> a structural approach to language teaching lays emphasis on systemic knowledge and makes the assumption that once this is acquired the learners will discover for themselves how it is put to use in communication. Classroom activities will tend to be those focusing attention on deciphering rather than on interpretation by indexical inference. Language difficulty will generally be measured in terms of decipherability, the problem of which can be eased by reducing the symbolic complexity of the text.

It is indicated that the emphasis on teaching aspects of usage or linguistic items, or even the simplifying of a text, is thought to help learners to develop their communicative competence. Nonetheless, the teaching-learning process based on these assumptions has failed to produce independent learners as stipulated by the basic objectives of higher education in the country (section 2.5 Chapter 2). Most students are not able to read, for instance, as well or as much as required by their academic studies. The gap between students' reading ability and the readability of their course books is apparent in most social science classes (section 5.2 and section 5.3 Chapter 5).

1.2 Objectives of the study

This study, having examined the academic problems related to reading in English at the University (section 2.5 and section 2.6 Chapter 2 below), investigates a possible approach to develop students' reading ability in English for academic purposes. The approach is based on the assumption that individualising reading instruction promotes

(a) the development of the appropriate background knowledge essential for reading comprehension in English (section 3.2223 Chapter 3),
(b) individual participation in the teaching learning process (section 3.3 Chapter 3), and
(c) independent learning which is what is stated as desirable in the institutes of higher learning in the country (section 2.4 Chapter 2; section 3.3 Chapter 3).

The study, which is designed to meet individual learners' needs, proposes the use of individualised reading in order to develop learners' background knowledge and generate learner autonomy. The assumptions underlying the study are in harmony with the principal educational aims of the University (section 2.4 and section 2.5 Chapter 2 below). The individualised reading programme which is designed to help learners develop their background knowledge (essential for reading in English for academic purposes) by encouraging them to be aware of the reading process and reading strategies, is based on the following major assumptions (section 3.3 Chapter 3).

1.21 Learner differences

It is assumed that the first year students are different in their styles and rate of learning as they are also different in their cultural and linguistic background and what they bring to the learning environment (section 2.2 Chapter 2, section 4.2 and section 4.3 Chapter 4 below). Researchers on individual differences assert that learners are also different in what they bring to the learning situation (Skehan 1989; Ellis and Sinclair 1989; Dickinson 1987). It is essential that a learning environment be created to accommodate the basic differences so that learners could take the initiative to exploit their preferred styles and

rate of learning to develop their ability to read in English for academic purposes (Holec 1980:30-1; Brindley 1989:75; Riley 1987; Altman 1980:11-2). However, this does not imply that learners will not be exposed to effective strategies of learning to read and reading to learn. As Dickinson (1987:1) recommends, the study is based on the belief that some sort of greater flexibility can be adopted in the service English classrooms so that for instance, "teachers teach only part of the time, and the remaining time is devoted to facilitating learning in other ways; so that learners with special needs, whether in terms of aptitude, purposes, or in terms of their own availability, can be catered for; and so that every learner's right to self-direction is respected."

1.22 Learner autonomy

It is understood, however, that all learners may not like to take the responsibility for their learning. Some ask for teacher's guidance in identifying what to learn and how to learn (section 5.21 Chapter 5; ***Appendix 3.1***, ***Appendix 3.2***). However, as stipulated in the educational objectives of the university, whatever teacher guidance is provided should facilitate independent learning and the learning of how to learn to read in English for academic purposes. It would be misleading to assume that it is an end by itself. It has been mentioned above that the typical Freshman English class is teacher-dominated. The teacher[3] (or rather the Freshman English Testing Committee) decides what units to cover, how to cover and how to evaluate student performance. In most instances, the teacher picks up the selected a unit, explains the items (mainly linguistic), asks students to do or skip the exercises that follow and, then, marks students' answers or provides answers he/she thinks appropriate (section 4.341 Chapter 4 below).

The individualised reading programme is based on facilitating learner participation in selecting what to read and how to read both in class and outside. However, as indicated in section 5.21 and section 5.31, due to the contemporary teacher-student expectations,

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[3]When a reference is made to the teacher, it is implied that the teacher represents the authority, whether it is the Freshman English Testing Committee (in this case), or otherwise. It is also intended to indicate that learning decisions are not made by the language learner. So, the reference is not necessarily to the individual Freshman English lecturer, but to all lecturers as operating according to institutional expectations.

the programme has suggested the use of selected reading packages, that is the ***ELSIP*** and the *SRA* reading materials, for learners to learn to read in English for academic purposes. Learners are encouraged to select appropriate reading cards or books from the collection, exercise and develop their reading competence using these materials and to be able to assess their performance in order to define what they need and what they lack objectively. Such a process of learning by doing is believed to generate learner responsibility for one's own learning to read for academic purposes.

1.23 Learner training

Dickinson (1987:2) argues that learners do not become self-directed and "achieve autonomy by being told to, nor by being denied conventional class teaching" (section 3.4 Chapter 3). This is likely to frustrate any learning. In fact, some students prefer teacher direction (***str. 3.1267 Appendix 3.12***, for example). But, it is argued that teacher direction can be taken as part of the process of learner training, and not as an end by itself. It should be exploited in such a way that it engenders learner independence and learner directed learning. As Ellis and Sinclair (1989), Holec (1980:30ff), Allwright (1982), among others, argue, as a language learning and teaching approach, individualisation does not imply denying the learner to learn from the teacher or from other students. It is recommended that learners should get the appropriate guidance from the teacher, the materials and other learners.

However, the study is based on the philosophical assumption that no knowledge is permanent, that is, today's knowledge about something may be proved to be wrong tomorrow, and that effective learning constitutes *learning how to learn*. As Rogers (1983:120) points out, the educated person is the one who has learned how to learn or to adapt to change. He states further by indicating that the educated person is the one

> who has realized that no knowledge is secure, that only the process of *seeking* knowledge gives a basis for security. Changingness, a reliance on *process* rather than upon static knowledge, is the only thing that makes any sense as a goal for education in the modern world.

The study emphasizes developing the awareness of the process of learning to read (and not merely the spelling out of a recommended 'dosage' of reading skills or strategies to be learned and applied) and encouraging the use of effective reading strategies not only for the purpose of passing reading tests in Freshman English but also developing the ability to apply them in the other academic courses. Basically, this is what should identify the service English courses from the other social science courses. As language service courses, they should enable students to learn appropriate reading strategies so that they could effectively use them to learn or read their other academic courses. Currently, the service English courses are handled in the same manner as the other social science academic courses.

1.3 The scope of the study

The pilot study was based on the first year social science students of the 1989-90 academic year. The experiment was undertaken in the second semester of the same year. It lasted for four months. Six sections (out of the twenty one social science first year sections), involving about one hundred and eighty students, were selected for the study. At the end of the study, two of the six sections, one control and one study, did not take the post tests for reasons described in section 4.1 and section 4.2 Chapter 4 below. The results of the pilot study are analyzed in section 5.2 Chapter 5.

The main study was undertaken in the 1990-91 academic year. Thirteen out of the twenty one sections of the first year social science students (section 4.3 below) were selected using the criteria discussed in section 4.1 Chapter 4. The thirteen sections included about 420 students. About 210 students were assigned to constitute the study group. The remaining were considered as control. Both studies operated under the following constraints:

1.31 Administrative constraints

The administrative staff concerned with freshman courses felt that it was illegal to use different sets of teaching materials other than the officially prescribed ones in the service

English classes. Another point of objection was that the time allotted for the teaching of the grammatical items specified in the two course books was not enough. It is indicated in section 4.2 and section 4.3 Chapter 4 that two hours in a week were allotted to the reading lab and one hour per week was assigned to the classroom discussion. It was made clear to the authorities that during the discussion classes students would be advised to cover the Freshman English course book and to do exercises similar to those in the course books and Freshman English test papers. This was mainly done to convince the authorities that the students were learning Freshman English and not another subject, and that they were appropriately *being prepared* for the conventional Freshman English examination. This is discussed in detail in section 4.1 and section 4.2 below.

1.32 Staff-student attitude

The study recommended what was considered to be unorthodox by some lecturers and students (section 5.31 and section 5.4 Chapter 5). Their fears were mainly based on two factors: the study recommended a different set of self-access materials for developing reading; it also relegated the standard Freshman English 101A and Freshman English 101B course books to become supplementary materials for developing learners' grammar awareness. Their fears were made worse by the stance the social science Freshman administrative staff took regarding the study (section 2.4 Chapter 2 and section 4.1 Chapter 4 below). Thus the study had to make some compromises. Lecturers were allowed to recommend the 'discussion' of the grammatical items specified in the books during the discussion sessions as outlined in section 4.23 and section 4.34 Chapter 4.

1.33 Time constraints

It has been pointed out in section 4.1 Chapter 4 below that the study sessions had to fit into the official schedule of the first year students. More time could not be devoted to the individualised reading sessions despite the need for such a programme to prove to be effective within the limited academic year. Moreover, one of the major factors for selecting sections for the study was based on the suitability of the students' Freshman English schedule to allow them to use the Spoken English laboratory when it was free.

This had to be worked out to avoid any clashes or inconveniences. It was not allowed to make any changes in the schedule of the first year students (section 4.1 Chapter 4).

The constraint of time may also have a strong bearing on explicit change of behaviour as a result of learning. Despite the fact that learners differ in their rate of learning and some may learn fast, in most cases time plays a significant role in the learning process. Learning is related to exploring and trial-and-error (section 5.1 Chapter 5). All this calls for the availability of adequate time for exploration and experimentation in the process of learning (Geddes and Sturtridge 1982:2*f*; Holec cited in Tumposky 1982:11-3).

Both the pilot and study were limited to one semester or four months each (section 4.2 and section 4.3 below Chapter 4). Learning outcomes in such a short period of time might not be significant though it is anticipated that there would be conspicuous attitudinal changes (section 5.1, section 5.21 and section 5.31 Chapter 5).

1.4 Research design and methodology

The study focused on first year social science students. It had two stages. The first was the pilot study conducted in the second semester of 1989-90 academic year. This was mainly planned to trial the design of the study and the materials - the self-access materials - intended for the study. The second was the main study conducted in the first semester (originally planned to last two semesters but discontinued due to sudden closure of the university in the second semester of 1990-91 academic year (section 2.4 Chapter 2 below). Both studies were constrained by the variables mentioned in section 1.3 above, section 4.2 and section 4.3 Chapter 4 below. The selected population was categorized into study and control in both studies (section 4.1 Chapter 4).

The materials selected for the individualised reading sessions were the English Language Self Instruction Package, ***ELSIP*** for short - a package consisting of graded readers with tapes produced by various ELT publishers and suitable as self access materials and the ***SRA*** reading package ***3a*** (1985 revised edition). The former was used with the pilot group and the latter with the corpus study group (section 4.2224 and section 4.335

Chapter 4 for the description and utilization of these materials).

The test package for all groups for pretest and post test consisted of the following:

a. two sets of questionnaires on students' awareness of the reading process, and on their reading habits and styles. This is explained in section 4.331 Chapter 4 below. The results are discussed in section 5.31 Chapter 5.
b. two sets of general English language ability tests drawn from earlier test papers of Freshman English 101A and Freshman English 101B as explained in section 4.332 Chapter 4 below. The test results are indicated in section 5.22 and section 5.32 in Chapter 5.
c. two sets of cloze tests to establish the readability levels of the first year course books as described in section 4.223 and section 4.333 Chapter 4 below. Section 5.22 and section 5.32 Chapter 5 analyze the effect of the approach on students' performance in the cloze tests, that is, whether or not the approach has enabled the students to read their course books without any problems.

1.5 Hypotheses

The study is launched to try a possible approach to developing students' reading ability so that the gap between first year students' reading ability and the readability of their course books could be substantially and effectively reduced. Thus this would enable students to function more efficiently as university students. The underlying assumption of the study, based on the research findings cited in section 2.5 and section 2.6 Chapter 2 below, is that the students' background knowledge (both systemic and schematic knowledge) is deficient due to problems in the educational system (section 2.2 and section 2.4 Chapter 2) and the remedial English courses, in their present format and content, could not help students to cope with the academic demands in the university.

The study assumes background knowledge in its narrowest sense by deriving it from the apparent objective and immediate needs of the students. Background knowledge is circumscribed within the boundaries of general English language improvement, reading

comprehension development, and increased awareness and appropriate use of the reading process and reading strategies respectively. The study is thus designed to measure any significant improvements in these elements.

In other words, it is hypothesized that at the end of the study besides the apparent but unmeasurable changes in learning behaviour, students will make significant improvements in the following:

a. general English language ability as measured by the Freshman English 101A and Freshman English 101B test papers (the results are indicated in section 5.223 and section 5.323 Chapter 5),

b. reading comprehension ability as indicated on the Cambridge University Local Examinations Syndicate *First Certificate in English* (the results are discussed in section 5.221 and section 5.321 Chapter 5)

c. readiness to cope with the academic course books as shown on their performance on cloze tests drawn from their academic course books (the readability test results are discussed in section 5.222 and section 5.322), and

d. awareness of the reading process and the use of appropriate reading strategies for academic purposes as indicated in the responses of the students to the questionnaire on reading, and the various staff and student reports on their experience (responses to the questionnaire on reading skills and strategies are indicated in section 5.21, section 5.31 and section 5.4 Chapter 5).

1.6 Contents of the study

The recommended approach to reading instruction in English for academic purposes in the first year programme of the Addis Ababa University is designed in such a way that it responds to the major learner variables. These variables are supposedly the products of the socio-cultural and linguistic diversities of the country. It is implied that the

students joining the university come with these and other variables. These variables, it is believed, may affect the teaching of English in the country. The geographical, historical and socio-cultural diversities have affected the objectives, patterns and, subsequently, the quality of the educational system in the country in general and the university in particular. Chapter Two surveys the role of English language teaching in the educational system in the country. This chapter is concluded by citing the relevant literature on the service English courses in the university and recommending a study to be made on better and more effective approaches to reading instruction within the limits described.

The search for a possible approach for effective reading instruction is made by citing the relevant theoretical constructs of applied linguistics (Kennedy 1989:xi). Chapter Three contextualises the major assumptions of the study. It surveys the appropriate theories of reading and the individualisation of instruction in English language education. The chapter concludes by suggesting the design of a course of study to develop effective reading in English for academic purposes.

It is hypothesized that individualised reading instruction results in improvement in students' reading comprehension ability, general English language ability, their readiness to cope with the academic studies, and their awareness of the reading process and the appropriate reading strategies. Chapter Four describes the design of the study, both of the pilot and main study, the reading materials used for individualised reading, and the tests employed to establish whether or not students in the study group have become effective readers. The chapter also features the major constraints encountered in the selection of the students for the study and in conducting the experiment.

The results of the tests administered to establish whether or not students in the main study have improved in developing their reading ability - reading comprehension, reading levels of the course books, linguistic proficiency - as a result of the approach used is discussed in Chapter Five. Chapter Five also consists of the comparison of the students' responses to the questionnaire on reading before and after the study, and in this chapter, an attempt is made to highlight the changes in students' conceptions about the reading process and

reading strategies in light of the approach used. Students' and instructors' attitudes to individualised reading and learning is also included in this chapter.

Chapter Six summarises the theoretical constructs underpinning the reading process and individualisation as an approach to develop students' reading ability in English for academic purposes. This chapter begins with a brief description of the salient educational problems in the country in general and in Addis Ababa University in particular. It is argued that one major source of problem in the service English courses is that they do not pursue an approach that addresses individual differences both in background knowledge, cognitive styles and strategies and learning strategies. They do not build on these. This chapter summarises the output of the research in order to justify that individualised reading instruction is a possible approach to help students develop their systemic and schematic knowledge that is claimed by current research as crucial for reading in English for academic purposes (Moran and Williams 1993, Grabe 1991). Finally, the chapter concludes by suggesting some topics, related to the current study, for further investigation and study.

CHAPTER TWO

Background of the study

2.1 Introduction

Critics of the Ethiopian educational system raise the medium of instruction as one of the major causes for the growing decline in the quality of education. It is argued that since students are made to learn in English, they are not able to learn as efficiently as is desirable. Neither the teachers nor the students, it is argued, seem to find operating in English as easy as they might do, for instance, in Amharic (Stoddart 1986). In most instances, all the educational drawbacks are attributed to the use of English as a medium of instruction. It can also be concurred that the educational system is not in harmony with the fundamental needs of the country. Moreover, it seems that the country cannot afford to provide the appropriate funding and running of the country's schools for the ever-increasing number of children (Rogers 1969; Last 1983). Thus, most schools are crowded and usually proper attention is not given to students to learn as efficiently as the resources could permit. It is argued that the crisis in education is not only caused by poor financing of the education, but also by the fact that a foreign language is used as a medium of education (Rogers 1979).

The most pressing need in the educational sphere in developing countries has been the establishing of an appropriate educational system to enhance socio-cultural and technological development on one hand and to maintain certain traditions and cultural values on the other. Especially after the Second World War, several countries have adopted the Western educational system to serve mainly the task of national reconstruction and scientific development. Apparently, this decision has an embedded paradox. Researchers (Clark 1987) agree that any educational system embodies the socio-cultural values of the particular society; that is, the purpose of education is usually to promote certain social ideals and value systems. For instance, the Western educational system promotes Western value systems. Thus, a country *importing* a Western educational

system for national reconstruction and the perpetuation of certain domestic social values may discover that the system does not function as planned; that is, it might not help in national reconstruction and technological development. The educational system may create alienation and disillusion (Teshome 1979, Seyoum 1987).

Another problem tied to the establishment of a viable educational system is the task of selecting a medium for education. In countries where there is a continuity in the educational set up, that is, a situation where a country is not forced by circumstances to import an educational system prevails, the question of selecting a language for instruction may not arise. However, in a country where many languages are spoken and where a decision has been made to *import*, for instance, a Western style of education, the tendency is to either adopt the language of the imported educational system or to select the dominant local language/s. The former is usually expedient, at least in the short term (though there is the danger of overreliance on imported teaching materials and expatriate teaching staff as it is evident in Ethiopia specially at the initial stages), and the latter is controversial and expensive since it would involve, among other things, the selection and, sometimes, standardization of a domestic language/s (Fishman and others 1968) and the training of personnel to translate and to write teaching materials in one or more of the selected local languages). Apparently, a developing country is not economically strong enough to undertake the second option. So, the use of an imported language as a medium of instruction in many developing countries may not necessarily be motivated by the assumption that the language promises various coveted opportunities for the educated (as Rogers 1989 implies), but it may be because the country concerned may not be economically and politically ready to substitute it by domestic languages.

It is believed that the selection of a certain language as a medium for education is usually justified, among other things, by socio-political, historical and geographical factors. In other words, a given country would be forced to adopt a certain language for education, be it domestic or imported, by the historical, geographical, and the socio-political and economic factors. McNab (1989:7) states that "language policies for education are ... a product of the interaction between national objectives as expressed in the education objectives, sociopolitical history, and the language situation of the country." In Ethiopia,

it has been a long standing policy to promote the use of Amharic in all educational levels along with the use of English as a medium of instruction in the secondary and tertiary levels. The promotion of a single language in the educational system is believed to encourage unity in this multi-ethnic and multi-linguistic country (Markakis 1974).

With a population of about 43.3 million based on an estimation for 1985 - as much as 23.3 million dependents (6.9 million youth, 16.4 million school age) and 19.9 million labour force (Asmerom 1988:28) - and a GNP per capita of about $110, Ethiopia is one of the poorest countries in the world. About 89 per cent of the population is rural and agriculture accounts for 50 per cent of GDP, 90 per cent of the export, and provides 85 per cent of the employment. Though agriculture is the main potential resource for development, it has remained basically subsistent and consistently affected by a series of droughts and famine, poor methods of farming and civil strife that have precipitated the dislocation of a large majority of the farming population for many years. The topography of the country sustains nomadic pastoralism, in the semi-arid lowland areas, and sedentary farming in the highlands.

It is to be noted that the country's topography is characterised by rugged terrain and steep valleys, and mostly non-navigable rivers that hinder internal transport and communication (McNab 1989:41). However, the country's "mountains have afforded a large amount of protection from outside forces and have allowed Ethiopia to develop its social and political system in relative isolation" (Schwab 1985:4). The isolation was not only with the outside world but also within the regions of the country. Such a phenomenon, coupled with other domestic and international factors, has encouraged the sustenance for many years the growth of strong ethno-linguistic entities in circumscribed localities due to daunting problems of transportation and communication.

In addition to the topography of the country, the strategic location of the country has also contributed to its linguistic diversity. Ethiopia is located on the edge of the *fragmentation belt* of languages that extend from Senegal in West Africa to the horn of Africa or East African Highlands (Dalby quoted in McNab 1987:9). Linguists have found out that three of the six of the Afro-Asiatic language families (Greenberg cited in McNab 1989:9)

(Semitic, Cushitic and Omotic language families) are found in Ethiopia. Again these major linguistic families consist of about eighty different languages (Trudeau 1967; McNab 1989). Although such a linguistic diversity is not uncommon in sub-Saharan Africa, language researchers confirm that Ethiopia is unique in the region in the fact that it has maintained a long tradition of writing for both secular and religious affairs since the time of the Aksum civilisation (that is, the fourth century A.D.) (McNab 1987:9*f*; Pankhurst 1955; Markakis 1974).

However, as mentioned above, the fact that the country has a long tradition of writing has not helped much to spread literacy in the country. Most of the languages in the country do not have writing systems. It is only recently that the percentage of illiteracy has been claimed to be lowered (section 2.2 below). In sum, the geography of the country has encouraged the sustenance of many languages, the majority of which have no writing systems.

Another factor that has promoted the diverse socio-cultural and linguistic phenomena is related to the history of the country. Three major historical epochs can be arbitrarily established to examine the prominent precedents for the development of the ethno-linguistic diversities in the country. The first epoch starts with the rise and growth of the Aksumite civilisation in the fourth century A.D., its demise with the rise of Islam in the ninth century, and the migration of the Oromos to the lands of the predominantly Christian highlanders (the Amhara and Tigrean population) in the sixteenth century. Markakis (1974:13) states "the Aksumite empire, which flourished on the northern part of the plateau for an extended period beginning with classical times, is considered the lineal ancestor of Ethiopia." During this era, it seems that there were only a limited number of languages spoken. This era is noted for, among other things, the growth of *Ge'ez* literature, the expansion of Islam in the country and the penetration of the Oromo to the central and northern highlands. These phenomena accentuated the socio-linguistic diversity of the country. The empire lost its ports at the Red Sea and the strategic caravan routes during the expansion of Islam in the eighth century which terminated the era of Aksum as a centre of power. The religious and political phenomenon, coupled with the influx of the Oromos to the central highlands, resulted in civil strife and the weakening

of the central power (Markakis 1974:14*ff*; Levin 1965; Trimingham 1965).

The second epoch ushers in the beginnings of the seventeenth century, when the Christian Kingdom was effectively sealed off by the Turks from external contacts, and culminates in the beginning of the twentieth century, when the Italians invaded the country in 1936. This period is characterised by features of decentralisation and the proliferation of small states (Markakis 1974; Schwab 1985), the further expansion of Islam (Trimingham 1965), and, towards the end of this period, the major expansion of the state towards the south and the incorporation of many ethno-linguistic groups, especially in the southern parts of the country, and the gradual growth of the power of the central government that was only frustrated by the short-lived Italian occupation of 1936-41 (Lipsky 1967:5*ff*; Markakis 1974; Pankhurst 1955). Towards the end of this period, an attempt was made to found a Western style modern educational system, but it was not made available to the majority of the Ethiopian population which remained predominantly illiterate.

The last epoch can be taken to occupy present day Ethiopia and the developments in the country after the 1940's. The fundamental task of the kings that reigned since the end of the late nineteenth century was to consolidate power and to dilute ethno-linguistic diversities. Sjostrom and Sjostrom (1983:34) state that one of the most important goals of the late emperor, Haile Sellasie, "was the creation of a strong central state power, thus eliminating much of the power of the regional aristocracy and landowners, as well as the risk of uprisings in the provinces."

Thus, it is contended that soon after the liberation, the Emperor's attempts to introduce a modern type of education was rather motivated by this objective than by the awareness of the impending socio-economic problems and ethno-linguistic diversities of the country. To realise this, that is, the perpetuation of a strong centralised power led by a dominant ethno-linguistic group, the emperor, according to Sjostrom and Sjostrom (1983:34) "needed a corps of bureaucrats with a modern education, who gave their first loyalty to the Emperor. The development of an industrial sector, which was to finance the centralisation process, also called for a sophisticated state apparatus. Thus a modern educational system, especially at the secondary level, became necessary."

English language teaching was, thus, introduced along with a modern Western style of education in Ethiopia, a country with a long tradition of archaic feudalism, backwardness, and a high rate of illiteracy. "With the liberation of Ethiopia in 1941 ... English became the medium of instruction in all government schools, a reflection of the new close ties with Britain following the liberation" (McNab 1989:79; Desta 1979; Pankhurst 1955). Western education, apparently based on the British educational value system, was more or less imported as it was rather than adapted to meet the prevailing needs of the newly liberated country that demanded modern infrastructure for reconstruction. Of course, as Abbott states, one may claim that "western education systems, along with their values and aims, were implanted or imported into countries ... which could well devise more suitable ones for themselves" (1989:16). Whether the imperial government, however, could have found its own educational system to further the planned technological development and enhance centralised power is a question for speculation. It might also be questionable whether the government had the power to make the decision in light of the prevailing conditions, immediately before the start of the Second World War. Thus, it is difficult to conjecture what could have happened if the government had decided to evolve its own *unique* system of education to produce skilled manpower for the emerging bureaucracy introduced basically to facilitate the process of centralisation and modernisation.

Admittedly, the importing of a Western educational system could have its own adverse consequences. In effect, "when a modern western-type of education system was introduced into Ethiopia, it was necessary not only to employ foreign staff but also to import the textbooks... (which) were not only written in a foreign language but were also reflective of a culture and an environment entirely foreign to the average pupil" (Maaza 1961:18). Fassil states that the educational system which was "introduced in the country was almost entirely the replica of the European [sic] system]. In 1949/50 close to 90 per cent of the teachers were expatriates who came from various countries, including Britain, Canada, Egypt, France, India, (and) Sweden. The curriculum, the teachers, and the teaching materials were generally imported" (1990:13-14). Moreover, English language teaching for secondary schools was based on the syllabus for London University's ***General Certificate of Examination*** at the initial stages (Madsen 1976:489). This has its historical precedent.

English language teaching in Ethiopia dates back as far as the 1940's when it was introduced as a language of instruction in secondary schools. "In July 1943, the government established the Haile Selassie I Secondary School in Addis Ababa with some assistance from the British Council. The establishment of this school marks the beginning of secondary education in Ethiopia" (Fassil 1990). It was about this time that English was adopted as a second language for the country's emerging bureaucracy and expanding international relations. Ethiopia, then coming of age, needed a language for international relations and its choice of English for this purpose was not accidental. As Kennedy points out, "policy decisions on the role of English in a country's educational system are not made in a vacuum and they will always be related to decision takers' political views" (1989:3). The British played a significant and decisive role in the struggle for liberating the country from five years of Italian occupation (Pankhurst 1955; Desta 1979). Moreover, the emergence of America as a world power (and Ethiopia's growing relations with America) and the widespread use of English in international relations specially during and after the Second World War influenced the imperial government to adopt English as the second language for its bureaucracy and as a language of instruction in schools. Of course, English language teaching was predominantly based on an imported syllabus (Maaza 1961; Trudeau 1967 ; Fassil 1990; Teshome 1990).

The choice of English as a medium of education was relatively easy to realise as there was no school system in operation using a modern language for education except the few traditional church and *Quran* schools that used *Ge'ez*, now a dead language, and Arabic respectively. These traditional schools were limited in all respects and their educational objectives, basically religious, did not match with the contemporary needs of the country - the training of an able elite which would facilitate the running of a modern state and expedite the centralisation process. The emperor was able to enlist both British and American support to found new schools and to modernize the few old ones (Trudeau 1967; Desta 1979; Fassil 1990).

Since then, English has remained as a language of instruction, with modifications in syllabus, methodology and teaching materials, despite some recommendations (section 2.3 below) that it should be replaced by the official language, Amharic (Tesfaye and Taylor

1976; McNab 1987; 1989). Rogers (1967) and Stoddart (1986) claim that English-medium schooling and English language teaching in Ethiopia is not informed by the specific needs of the country and it is expensive and unjustifiable for the country to run its education in a foreign language.

2.2 Education in Ethiopia

It is mentioned above (section 2.1) that Ethiopia had some form of educational system, written literature and a writing system of its own for centuries. Pankhurst (unlike some scholars such as Trudeau) believes that the present educational system is "profoundly moulded" by the past. He expounds his argument by stating

> it owes much of its distinctive character to the fact that Ethiopia is the only African country to have both remained predominantly Christian for over a millennium and a half, and to have preserved its ancient independence throughout the European 'Scramble for Africa'. Contacts with the nearby Arab world have, however, had a strong influence in certain areas, while the activities of missionaries of various nationalities and creeds have also at various times had a by no means insignificant impact (1976:305).

The Ethiopian church schools were mostly religious schools that trained individuals to serve the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. The education consisted in "the first stages of the students career in learning to read, write, and recite a few biblical texts in *Ge'ez*, ... (the) ecclesiastical language" (Pankhurst 1976:305). Pankhurst (307-8), by quoting C.H. Walker, a sometime British consul, expresses the type of teachers employed, in the following words:

> The teacher may be a priest who is a *Liq*, or Professor, who knows much learning. Some of the *Liqawnt* [plural of *Liq*] have a medicine which they give to the boys that they remember well. Or he may be an ordinary priest or even a scribe, though the scribe they praise not overmuch, for he may work cunning and wander here and there round the town. But a priest [or rather the teacher] will sit as a judge and will punish the boy who errs, crying: 'Was that what I told thee yesterday?' pulling and twisting his ear, till he pours forth tears. Thus he will learn, perforce.

Apparently, this description embodies the traditional educational concept of the roles of

teachers and students, the methodology of teaching and the concept and transmission of knowledge. For various reasons, most of the students in church schools dropped out but the remaining few pursued such fields as church music, poetry, theology, church history, philosophy, manuscript writing, and painting. According to Markakis (1974:143), "in addition to the exclusively religious curriculum, which includes reading and writing of *Ge'ez* and Amharinya [the official language], the student is imbued with the traditional values of humility, obedience to authority, and deference for age and rank," considered as the fundamental tenets of traditional Ethiopian education.

It is believed that the church school system started during the Aksumite period when Christianity was introduced to the country about the fourth century A.D. (section 2.1 above). Haile Gabriel (1976:339) states that "the church schools originated in the 'golden time' of the Church from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries in which literature of the Church reached its peak. After the ... seventeenth century, cultural activities declined," and so did the church educational system and its capability to transform itself to the changing needs of the society and to spread literacy among the population in full scale. However, researchers confirm that it remained the sole centre for scholarship for the few elite in the predominantly christian population until the late nineteenth century when the Western style modern educational system was introduced.

The *Quranic* schools provided similar services for the Muslim communities of the country. The schools used Arabic and they taught Arabic letters and reading of the *Quran,* Islamic cannon law (*fiqh*), Arabic grammar (*nahew)*, and the commentaries or *tefsir* (Haile Gabriel 1976:339-370). However, it is claimed that "the average rural school offers only the most elementary study of Arabic and some desultory reading of the *Quran*" (Markakis 1974:143).

One source of contention regarding the introduction of modern Western style of education in Ethiopia is that it was not based on the traditional educational system, especially that of the Church, which was not exclusively religious. Some feel that the modern educational system has the traditional legacies of the church (Teshome 1990:69*f*; Pankhurst 1976). However, others, for instance Trudeau (cited in Teshome 1990:69*f*),

argue that "these church schools and monasteries ... did not influence the modern educational system of higher education." There could be two major reasons for this. As Teshome (1979) points out, the traditional educational system was so archaic that it could not be redesigned to suit the purpose of establishing a modern centralised power with an effective modern machinery to maintain it, though it had remained for centuries as a strong tool for sustaining political power. It was felt that it was impossible to remodel it to play a significant role in the newly emerging socio-economic and political challenge. Another reason could be that the Church along with the traditional nobility constituted a 'threat' to the Emperor's government. A reliance on the Church, which championed a conservative outlook and that shared an unchallengeable power with the state for centuries (Taddese 1972), for creating a corps of bureaucrats loyal to the Emperor would have been unwise and might have frustrated his ambitions to become the uncontested ruler of the country (Schwab 1985; Sjostrom and Sjostrom 1983). With the influence of the European powers, especially Britain, France and Italy (Markakis 1974:144) from the times of Menelik II, Haile Selassie, the emperor, might have thought the European educational model was much more convenient and appropriate. Whatever the case may be, soon after the liberation in 1941, one of the major reconstruction tasks of the imperial government was "the creation of a mass education system capable of providing Ethiopia with a corps of educated personnel from all walks of life to replace the traditional nobility in responsible positions throughout the country" (Lipsky cited in Haile 1976:324).

Modern education in Ethiopia expanded rapidly specially in urban centres. However, it was confronted by a series of impending hurdles. Markakis (1974:149ff) points out the system suffered from unevenness in many aspects of its development - the glaring disparity between urban and rural areas and among regions (Addis Ababa and Shoa took the lion's share), the sex ratio, severe attrition rate, and the shortage of teaching personnel. This is also confirmed by Schwab (1985:87-8). Trudeau (in Fassil 1990:12) states that the emphasis of the educational system in the 1940's and 1950's was academic despite the fact that it was adopted to promote technological know-how. He further states that

> Everyone directed his attention to the High School Certificate (either the London General Certificate of Education or the Ethiopian School Leaving Certificate)... . Commercial, technical and agricultural education were regarded as second class

> education, reserved for those who could not make the grade in academic secondary schools, or who had to go to work immediately after finishing their secondary education.

Despite its rapid expansion in the thirty years of its existence, pre-1974 education could not emancipate itself from some burgeoning constraints. Fassil (1990) states that the participants of the *Education Sector Review* (which was established to evaluate and suggest solutions to the problems of the educational system) asserted the following drawbacks of the contemporary educational system: the problem of alienation of the Ethiopian youth by reason of an imported educational system (see also Teshome 1990; Girma 1992;Seyoum 1987); the elitist and rigid character of the educational system in spite of the diversity of the conditions that prevailed in the country; the problem of wastage on all levels of education; the inequitable distribution of educational opportunity, and the overcentralisation of the educational administration. According to Gilks (1975:95),

> the most telling of the criticisms is perhaps the objection to the concentration on academic themes, the assumption that all students will progress through the system to become bureaucrats; and this in a country where 95 per cent of the population is engaged in agriculture or related topics. The curriculum is laid down by specialists, often foreigners, who have little or no knowledge of the rural scene, and often little or no knowledge of the classroom either. Many of those involved in the curriculum planning have not even been teachers.

Incidentally, it might be interesting to relate whether such an educational legacy had an impact on post-revolution education. The objective of using the school as "subordinate to the political system and only permitted to change in a direction desired" (Sjostrom and Sjostrom 1983:41) continued. The government exploited "education to become a political weapon in its struggle to tie the population to its policies" (Schwab 1985:89). Its fundamental policy was the consolidation and centralisation of power and the promotion of an ideology. Besides serving as a means of the propagation of Marxist-Leninist ideology, the educational system was planned to help enhance production. With six years of primary, two years of junior secondary, four years of senior secondary and usually four years of higher education, the government emphasised polytechnic education and endeavoured to discourage an elite educational system. "The tempo of educational

progress was fast, though without a concomitant growth in the national economy (Fassil 1990:113). In 1988 in a workshop on population and youth in relation to education and employment, it was reported that the literacy attendance rate was as high as 71 per cent [sic], though it could not be claimed that all those who attended literacy classes completed their lessons and became literate. It was also claimed that formal education increased dramatically as indicated in Table 2.1 below.

Level	no. of schools	no. of students*	enrolment rate (per cent)
primary s.	8323	2.89	35
junior s.s	1044	0.461	21
senior s.s.	275	0.380	11

Table 2.1 Formal Education enrolment in 1988

source: Report of the National Seminar/Workshop 1988
Population and Youth in Relation to Education and Employment
(* in millions)

According to Table 2.1 above, 35 per cent of all school age children attend the primary school, 21 per cent attend the junior secondary school and only 11 per cent go to the senior secondary schools. This percentage decreases substantially in the institutes of higher learning. In the 1989 *Basic Education Bulletin,* the Ministry of Education revealed that the average pupil/teacher ratio was as high as 50 in junior secondary schools and the average pupil/school ratio was 1392 students at senior secondary level for 1988. Moreover, 98.1 per cent of the pupils enrolled in government schools while only 1.9 per cent were in non-government schools (Table 2.2 below).

Table 2.2 indicates increases in numbers. The increase in student population has not been accompanied by increases in school facilities, teacher qualifications and other resources (Last 1983; Eshetu 1991:220). According to Table 2.2, it may not be difficult to envisage a typical Ethiopian senior secondary school. Apparently, it would be similar to the one described either by McNab (1989) or even Stoddart (1986). Most senior secondary schools are crowded and operate on a shift basis, that is, most students usually receive half-day schooling, and the average pupil-teacher ratio is mostly more than 50. Most schools do not have libraries. It is indicated in Table 2.2 that the government manages the bulk of the educational establishment, thus making it easy for the government to

operate a highly centralised system and promote its own ideology. The fact that the Ethiopian educational system is highly centralised is also confirmed by the report of the English language teaching country profile of the British Council (1986). Admittedly, education in the country has come a long way forward from where it used to be in the

ratio/ per cent	year	type	primary	junior secondary	senior secondary
average pupil-teacher ratio	1974	-	46	32	28
	1988	-	49	50	41
average pupil-school ratio	1974	-	312	242	726
	1988	-	344	436	1392
pupils (in government and non-government schools) in percentage	1974	government	75	83.1	91.9
		non.gov't	25	16.9	8.1
	1988	government	89.7	90.7	98.1
		non.gov't	10.3	9.3	1.9

Table 2.2 Comparison of student population in schools in 1977 and 1988

source: *Basic Education Statistics, 1989,* Ministry of Education

1940's and 1950's. The old curriculum that came out in 1949 was inadequate and the instructional materials were based on foreign experience and they were not "geared to the needs of Ethiopians" (Teshome 1979).

Since 1974 the basic aim of education has been rendered to be less elitist than it used to be. More schools were opened to reach the mass of the people though without additional resources for the implementation of the educational objectives. Eshetu (1991:220) points out that "education expenditure in Ethiopia up to 1981 represents the largest component of social development expenditure, but its relative share of total spending has been declining (from 14.4 per cent in 1972, to 9.3 per cent in 1981". In relation to the national budget, "between 1972 and 1984 Ethiopia spent on average 20.6 per cent total public expenditure on social development, slightly less than the 22.8 per cent average for East

Africa region. Moreover, the overall trend has been downward, declining from 24.5 per cent of budget in 1972 to 15.7 per cent in 1984" (219). The amount of funds earmarked for education for 1985 was Ethiopian birr 319 million[1] (Asmerom 1988). Apparently, this amount could be claimed not to be sufficient for the effective running of the country's schools. In fact, most of the money goes to paying teachers' salaries.

The military government (not unlike its predecessor) emphasized the instrumentality of education for social change - education for enhancing production, for scientific research and above all, for raising political consciousness (Ministry of Education 1984; McNab 1989). It is indicated that its policy discouraged elitist education and there is a gradual shift of emphasis to polytechnic education. The educational system was planned to develop "an all-round profile rather than a narrower academic ability" (Last 1983). However, like in the pre-1974 period, educational development was inhibited by economic and political exigencies (Markakis 1974:154*f*).

Despite its plans and attempts to employ education as a means for change and to revolutionize the educational process to reach the vast majority of the peasantry, the military government was unable to appreciate the profound economic and socio-linguistic complications that its plans were bearing. The educational system which was highly centralized was affected by intrinsic and extrinsic factors. There were problems in implementation, a long-standing characteristic feature of the Ministry of Education (Tesfaye and Taylor 1976), and other factors such as economic backwardness and stagnation, and political instability (Last 1983) eroding the effectiveness of the planned educational system. Besides the widening of the gap between student population growth and the growth of the national economy, Fassil (1990) stated that "the working conditions of teachers, the reorganisation of the education sector to meet the new demands place[d] upon it, the question of the quality of education (and) the problem of wastage remained unanswered." Besides, it can be argued that the educational system neither accommodated nor responded to the glaring realities of the socio-cultural and linguistic diversities in the country. The large classes, characteristic of many schools at all levels, could not provide

[1]The currency in Ethiopia. Eth. birr 2.07 was officially equivalent to US $1.00.

effective learning exposure appropriate to each individual learner. The highly centralized system took the promotion of the ideology in the schools as a priority. Despite these, a number of researchers attribute the crisis in the present educational system, among other things, to the fact that the medium of instruction is English.

2.3 English Language Teaching and Education in Ethiopia

As mentioned in section 2.1, the imperial government was obliged to introduce a Western type modern educational system. It also adopted the English language as a medium of instruction. In the 1947/8 Elementary English Curriculum, it is stated that teaching English is essential because foreign teachers all speak English, textbooks for all subjects (except Amharic) are only available in English, for the professions, the first step is to pass an examination, and further reading can be done in English (Tesfaye and Taylor 1976:382).

It is to be noted that the Imperial Ethiopian Government sought help from the British Council in 1942 "to set up institutes for teaching English, to provide a library of English books and periodicals, and to procure English textbooks for schools" (Teshome 1979). As indicated above, English was adopted as a language of instruction in Ethiopian schools in 1944. The British Council helped in getting teaching materials and opening evening classes for teaching English. The teaching of English was mostly handled by Indian teachers and, later for a few years, by American Peace Corps Volunteers. Teacher training institutes were also founded to train Ethiopians to teach in these schools. But their training was not specifically to teach any subject.

In the 1947/8 Elementary English Curriculum, it is stated that the aims of teaching English, in the order given, included (a) reading and understanding, (b) hearing and understanding, (c) speaking the language fluently and correctly, (d) writing correctly and clearly. It is reported that the former two are fairly easy to teach, but the latter two are difficult. In other words,"for the teacher, reading can be very easy, and oral English very difficult, but with the latter the 'child will learn twice as much.' Thus 'if you wish your pupils to learn English, you must teach them to speak it' (Tesfaye and Taylor 1976:382).

This reflects the contemporary view of English language teaching methodology - the preference of the spoken to the written. In 1967, Rogers mentioned the following as the basic problems in English language teaching in the country: first, reading aloud was one of the commonest English lessons in every grade; second, Indian teachers were not introduced either to the ELT problems or to modern TESL methods; third, the inconsistency in when to introduce English teaching (despite the Ministry's policy in 1967 that English should be used from grade 3 onwards, he says it began in grade 1, or 2 or 3 in different schools in the country). The reports of the Curriculum-ESLCE[2] seminar of 1967 supported the above points. As a solution to the problems of teaching English in the country, the seminar recommended "an oral approach to language, more extensive drill of basic structures and oral practice prior to writing - in the early grades" (Madsen 1968:4).

In a conference on secondary education in Ethiopia held on 1-3 May 1962, it was recommended that the teaching of English be delayed until grade 3 because it was felt that the burden of having to learn a foreign language for young children at an early age was too much. It was also recommended that "audio-visual methods of teaching should take the place of the literal-grammar translation method. Language should be taught in the order: listen, speak, read, write" because, it was felt, "this was the way the mother tongue was acquired" (Tesfaye and Taylor 1976:389). The 1963/4 Secondary English Curriculum dictated that the general aims and purpose of all English teaching was, among others, to increase the proficiency and accuracy in spoken and written English, to increase fluency in speech and reading, to improve pronunciation and intonation, and to introduce students to good English literature (392). No mention was made regarding the use of the language for academic purposes or adopting an approach to suit the basic linguistic needs of the learners as individuals preferring different styles and strategies of learning the language, with different background knowledge and learning needs. The emphasis on the spoken testifies the contemporary approach to language teaching and reading was considered as having secondary importance (section 3.2 Chapter 3).

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[2]The Ethiopian School Leaving Certificate Examination.

Asfaw and Murison-Bowie (1976:415) listed a series of books widely distributed and recommended by the Ministry of Education and Fine Arts before the introduction of a series of English textbooks popularly known as the *New Oxford English Course Ethiopia* (*NOEC Ethiopia*) - an adaptation of the *New Oxford English Course East Africa.* The books recommended for elementary school curriculum included *The New Method Readers, Primer, Readers* 1-7 by West (1947), *New Method Composition* Books 1-5 by West (1940), *Self-help Exercises* Books 1-3 by French (1938), *A Pictorial English Grammar* Parts I and II by French (1949), *Fundamental English* by Ballard (1943), *An English Highway* Stage I by Moon and McKay (1938), *Simplified English Grammar* by Ripping (1935) and *Learning To Speak By Speaking* Section 4 by West (1937). The list for the secondary school curriculum included *The New Method Readers* Reader 5 and Companion, Reader 6 and 7 by West (1947), *Fundamental English,* Second Series I-IV by Ballard (1943), *Through Speech To Writing* I and II by Glassey (1947), *The Groundwork of English Composition* by Glassey (1940), *The Groundwork of Precis* by Glassey (1938), *Outline of English Grammar* by Nesfield (1950), and *Composition Exercises in Elementary English* by Hornby (1934). No information was available as to the range of use of any one of these titles. However, it is understood that many schools both in the capital and in the provinces used most of these books to teach English.

The work on the adaptation of *The New Oxford English Course (NOEC Uganda)* to *The New Oxford English Course Ethiopia* started after 1964 and teachers of English were given an orientation on handling the series in January 1966. It is noted that Book I of the *NOEC Ethiopia* was introduced into the elementary schools in September 1966 (Norrish 1970). Madsen (1969) recommended the use of *The NOEC Ethiopia* series by describing *The NOEC Ethiopia* Book 3, as soon as it came out for use. He stated that the series was appropriately developed for use in the teaching of English language in Ethiopia, and this book in particular was suitable because "contains much original material and its reading passages and exercises are based on sound analysis of the structures and vocabulary contained in *NOEC* Books 1 and 2, which it thoroughly consolidates."

With the introduction of *The NOEC Ethiopia* to the primary school (for grades 3 to 8 *NOEC Ethiopia* Books 1 to 6), *Ethiopian Folk Tales* by Bachrach (1967) was used in

Grade 7 until it was replaced by *NOEC Ethiopia* Book 5. The secondary schools used *English For Today* Book 3 'The Way We Live' by The National Council of Teachers of English (for Grade 9); *English For Today* Book 4 'Our Changing World' by the National Council of Teachers of English (for Grade 10); and *College English* Volumes I and II by Rogers, Tan and Hutton (1967) (for Grade 11 and Grade 12 respectively). The Ministry of Education and Fine Arts also recommended the use of the following textbooks in the specified grades: *The Big Tall Tree and Other Rhymes* by Black, and *Rhymes for Speech and Action* Book 1 by Aickman (for Grades 3 and 4); *Thorndike-Barnhart Beginner's Dictionary* by Thorndike and Barnhart (for Grade 7); *Thorndike-Barnhart Junior Dictionary* by Thorndike and Barnhart (1952) (for Grade 8); *Living English Structure* by Allen (1959) and *The Advanced Learners Dictionary of Current English* by Hornby, Gatenby and Wakefield (1963) (for Grades 9 to 12) (Asfaw and Murison-Bowie 1976:418*f*).

In 1969 it was planned that the English textbooks used in the secondary schools (Grades 9 to 12) would be replaced by a new series - *The Oxford English Course for Ethiopia*[3] - popularly known as the *Contact* series edited by Murison-Bowie. Murison-Bowie (1976:427*ff*) expounds the contemporary theories that informed the methodology used to develop the books. He also mentioned the educational context these books were designed to operate. The first book in the series was planned to be used as of the 1970/1 academic year and the remaining were to follow. In contrast to the 1967 *Curriculum-ESLCE* seminar recommendations mentioned above, the editor of the *Contact* series claims that

> the series is being written against a background of research into the overall aim of teaching English in Ethiopia at this level, into the role of the textbook in the classroom, and into the relevance to language teaching of developments in linguistics and related sciences. An attempt is being made to produce a course which will require minimum reliance upon the teachers (whose qualifications are uneven and who rarely stay long in their posts) in equipping the pupils with the

[3]This series is the first of its kind to be produced in the country to teach English in the Ethiopian secondary schools. According to Murison-Bowie (1976), the series was written to help students learn the language independently or with less teacher dependence and to provide students with substantial amount of linguistic input and facilitate the learning of the language. The series had the following components: listening (provided in the teacher's handbook), reading comprehension, meaning (vocabulary development section), structure and usage (grammatical explanations accompanied by exercises), and composition (writing exercises).

skills required of them at the end of their secondary education. These requirements are seen to centre upon the linguistic skills of being able to understand fairly sophisticated spoken and written English and of being able to speak and write fairly simple English, and on the educational skill of being able to appreciate more than one point of view, and assess a situation or opinion when presented with *conflicting* [sic] evidence.

The books were the first of their kind specifically designed to teach English in the Ethiopian secondary schools. However, before their effects on developing students' linguistic ability could be reliably assessed, they were replaced in 1979 by a new series - *English for New Ethiopia (ENE).* The new series was developed by the Curriculum Division of the Ministry of Education and was supposedly based on the following features: the content expressed in the language (English) to be primarily ideological or political to promote political education, revolutionary literature and scientific English; the 'integrated' approach to be used as a methodology; and the selection of linguistic items to be based on suitability, usefulness of content in the promotion of the ideology (Curriculum Division 1979:5*f*). The books were produced in haste to fill the gap created as a result of the Ministry's decision to scrap all materials and textbooks, including the *Contact* series, that were believed not to be reflecting the contemporary ideology.

It might be claimed that this step was taken to minimize the role of the English language teaching in the country (Stoddart 1986) because it was generally believed that most students "find it difficult to think in abstract terms, to generalize concepts and to comprehend things and phenomena in English" (Curriculum Division 1979:3). It could also be argued that the books followed the structuralist approach in an inconsistent way and they were too limited in scope and methodology to provide an adequate exposure to the English language in order to help students to develop their linguistic abilities. Most of the reading passages were too difficult to follow and many students did not read them at all. English classroom situations are clearly described by McNab (1987; 1989) and Stoddart (1986). The English teaching-learning situation in most government schools has deteriorated so much that hardly few benefit from it. Last (1983:ii) believes that the condition is created

by the strenuous efforts made for quantitative development in response to political

> and social demands for the universalisation of access to education and the democratisation of educational services (that) have limited the volume of resources which could be applied to upgrading the environment of education. These shortages of quality and even of essential inputs have obviously placed limits on the experiences which can be offered in the nation's schools.

Thus, most of Addis Ababa University's first year entrants do not have the required knowledge of the English language, or the knowledge of reading in English for academic purposes. It is believed that Addis Ababa University cannot remain unaffected by the changing situations in schools. The changes have affected both the educational system and the nature and quality of English Language teaching in the university as well.

2.4 The Addis Ababa University

Addis Ababa University started as the University College of Addis Ababa in 1951 as the first institution of higher learning in the country to promote the educational objectives of the imperial government mentioned in section 2.1 and section 2.2 above. In 1961, it became a university with a charter of its own and was renamed as the Haile Selassie I University. Haile Selassie I University incorporated the Colleges of Engineering (established in 1953), Building (established with Swedish help in 1954), Agricultural and Mechanical Arts (established in 1954 with *USAID* support), Public Health of Gondar (established in 1954 with the support of *WHO, UNICEF and USAID*), and Theology (established in 1960) (Markakis 1974:151*f*; Girma 1992; Seyoum 1987:57*ff*; Abebe 1987:4*f*).

It is indicated that the growth of the university student to staff ratio is relatively faster. The University College of Addis Ababa started with only 71 students and nine teaching staff. In 1961, the Haile Selassie I University started with 900 students and 100 academic staff. In 1983/84 academic year Addis Ababa University had about 10,398 students and about 899 academic staff (Seyoum 1987:58).

When the university was established, besides meeting the skilled manpower needs of the country, it was planned first and foremost to be Ethiopian in its purpose and content and

it was to give special emphasis to the Ethiopian tradition (Seyoum 1987:56). However, it is stated that there was a profound American influence in all spheres. Most of the founders and key decision-makers in the university were American expatriates. Until 1955 there was no Ethiopian academic staff member. Consequently, "at the inception of the Ethiopian national university, the concerns, apprehensions, and uncertainty expressed by members of the national community concentrated on several factors: that it was a secular institution, modelled on foreign ideas and staffed by foreigners, and offered instruction primarily in English" (Teshome 1990:153).

In response to this, the Addis Ababa University increased its Ethiopian academic staff in a relatively short period of time. In 1964, out of the 264 academic staff members, 34 per cent were Ethiopians. After the change of government, in 1975 it was 68 per cent and in 1983/84 academic year out of the 899 academic staff members, 79 per cent were Ethiopians. At present the university has expanded not only in the number of students and academic staff members but also in the number of faculties, departments and other services.

Broadly speaking, most researchers mention three fundamental weaknesses of higher education in the country prior to 1974. Firstly, there was no co-ordination among the various institutions of higher learning. Due to the duplication of programmes and the inefficient utilisation of available facilities, there was a waste of human and material resources. Secondly, there was a critical disparity between the country's manpower needs and the educational programmes offered in institutions of higher learning. It was alleged that much emphasis was given to the humanities and the arts. In fact this was radically reversed in the post 1974 period and, as a result there were more students in the sciences than in the arts although such a reversal might not have satisfied the basic manpower needs of the country. Lastly, there was a great disparity among the regions' and between the sexes' representation in the student population of the institutes of higher learning. The students coming from Addis Ababa, Shoa, Eritrea and Hararghe accounted for more than 70 per cent of the student population. This is also corroborated by the findings of this research in that a high percentage of the student population in the first year programme of the 1990/91 academic year came from urban areas and the majority reported that their

mother tongue was Amharic (section 4.32 Chapter 4). Moreover, there was a higher percentage of male population than female population (Girma 1992:109-125). Apparently, most of these constraints and others spilled over to the post 1974 period.

It has been pointed out that in post 1974 period the university experienced a high degree of expansion unprecedented in its thirty years history. However, besides the legacies of the past, as mentioned above, the university was constrained by various factors to live up to its ideals as an institution of higher learning - as a research and teaching institution. The task of the university was mainly limited to teaching or the *imparting of knowledge* and one often heard the usual appeal for staff to conduct research. What Abebe (1987:10) stated as the weaknesses of higher education prior to the 1974 period, thus confirming what Girma (1992) asserted, that is, the inability of the institution to orientate its curriculum to the Ethiopian situation, the inability of the institution to undertake curriculum revision and modernization - is mostly true during the post 1974 period. To these constraining factors, the following prominent features could be added: the expansion of the university beyond all its limits, including budgetary, and the political situations in the country and their serious repercussions in the university.

2.41 Curriculum Orientation

As indicated above (section 2.2) the rationale for the establishment of the university by the imperial government was to promote the creation of a modern state and the training of skilled manpower to help in this endeavour. However, the founders of the university seemed to be unaware of the conditions of the country and its basic needs. They designed the syllabuses for their respective courses according to their experiences in their respective countries' universities. The colleges which the Haile Selassie I University constituted followed the dominant ideas and view-points of their founding lecturers and administrators, for instance, the College of Business Administration and the College of Agriculture followed the American system, the Faculty of Medicine followed the British system (Markakis 1974). The letter grading and semester systems were American introductions. In fact, Aklilu, the second Ethiopian president of the Haile Selassie I University, stated that

> these colleges which existed and developed separately and independently of each other, each with its own history, its own purpose, its forms and style of organisation and administration were ... the legacies of the newly created university (quoted in Abebe 1987:5).

The colleges in the Haile Sellasie I University did not only fail to develop a uniform curriculum among themselves but they were also unable to relate the curriculum to the Ethiopian situation.

Abebe (1987:10) stated that the revised (1976) aims of the university shifted from the traditional emphasis on producing elites to the training of conscientious citizens who could make significant contributions to the development of the country. However, it cannot be denied that the university's universal objectives of the pursuit of knowledge and the search for truth were squashed under the military government's persistent attempts to employ the university to facilitate the centralization and consolidation of political power and the dissemination of the Marxist-Leninist ideology. Incidentally, it is claimed that an African university is meant to advance science and technology, impart knowledge by teaching, advance knowledge through research; to study, preserve and develop the Ethiopian cultural heritage; to identify itself with the society and to satisfy the man-power needs of the country (Abebe 1987; and for similar objectives of regional universities in Africa, Eastern and Southern African Universities Research Programme 1987:15-18). It is asserted that in order to fulfil these objectives new departments and institutions were opened, such as the School of Graduate Studies, the Institute of Language Studies, the reorganization of the College of Social Sciences, and others (see Abebe 1987 for a complete description of the reorganisation); however, all these introductions were without any significant budgetary increase. To what extent the above mentioned objectives were realised after the founding of new colleges and departments needs further research, but the problem of course duplication and irrelevance to specific needs still prevails. No attention has been given to the quality and content of education.

2.42 Curriculum revision and modernisation

Besides the problem mentioned in section 2.41 above, in the post 1974 Addis Ababa

University, some courses have not been updated to suit to changing needs or changes in the international academic world. Some courses might have phased out, but the courses that replaced them were as irrelevant. There were instances where courses overlapped, despite the course numbers they bore, and the use of outdated course books was not uncommon. However, this is not to imply that there was not any attempt made at curriculum revision and modernisation. It is to state that the serious social and political exigencies in the country made it difficult for the university to revise and develop its curriculum (section 2.44 below). In simple terms, the endeavours were constrained by administrative and financial constraints.

2.43 The expansion of the University

Before 1974 the university was dependent on Western help for teaching staff, materials and equipment (Markakis 1974). The military government discouraged such dependence and the university was made to operate using the budget allocated to it by the Central Treasury. Though the move was worthwhile, the financial assistance was by no means sufficient to run a large modern university. For instance, Seyoum (1987:68) states that in 1985 the university's annual budget was 37.4 million *birr*. But the university had to operate on a deficit of 5.3 million *birr* despite the fact that it was required to admit an increasing number of students every year. It is apparent that such serious financial constraints discourage any plans for improving the teaching and learning process in the university.

2.44 The political situation in the country

The political situation that prevailed after the 1974 revolution affected the university in many respects. The university could not remain immune to a myriad of political activities and moves by the government in its attempts to establish itself and to employ education for promoting ideological and political purposes. The university was closed down for two years as soon as the *Derge* assumed power and staff and students alike were sent out on a campaign called *Development Through Co-operation.* Most of the experienced senior staff, both expatriate and Ethiopian, fled the country after the military takeover. Some

staff members left the university to assume posts in the government. New staff from abroad could not be recruited because of threatening political situation and the financial constraints of the university. This created an acute staff shortage (Seyoum 1987:63).

To offset this, the university started to depend on part-time employees and young inexperienced Ethiopian staff (inexperienced in teaching and research undertaking). The inexperienced junior staff was forced to work in a situation where there were no course books for most of the courses and where there was an acute shortage of reference materials. The few periodicals the university library used to receive were discontinued due to budgetary problems. The rare research grants and scholarships (usually made available mainly through personal contacts with external universities and organisations) were made available to few staff members. However, the predominantly junior staff had to cope with the unprecedented increase in student population and experience the inevitable decline in the quality of education in the university.

In 1983/84 academic year, for instance, 61 per cent of the academic staff were juniors. This increase in 'Ethiopianization' did not, however, help decrease the staff-student ratio. It was as high as one instructor to thirty nine students for 1985 while similar universities in East Africa were reported to have one instructor to seven students (Abebe 1987:14).

College/ Faculty	Full-time equivalent	Staff lecturer and above	Staff/student ratio
Science	4344	102	1:43
Law	219	8	1:27
Technology	1031	42	1:25
Veterinary	149	16	1:09
Social Sc.*	3048	57	1:54
Awassa	867	19	1:46
Education	1326	26	1:51
Bahir Dar	1014	28	1:36
I. L. S.	1325	52	1:26

*excluding history

Table 2.3 Staff-student ratio in Addis Ababa University in 1985

Source: AAU Planning Office, 1985

Table 2.3, above, indicates that in 1985 the College of Social Sciences had the highest staff-student ratio, that is, one instructor to fifty four students. It was followed by Awassa Agricultural College. In that year, the Veterinary Science in Debre Zeit had the lowest ratio. The Institute of Language Studies had the ratio of one instructor to twenty six students for that year. However, it should be noted that the staff-student ratio in the Addis Ababa University is lower than in most other colleges in the country. For 1988-89 academic year, the highest staff-student ratio was one instructor to fifty one students in the Junior College of Commerce. It may be argued that this ratio is incredibly high for a college. Table 2.4 below indicates that Addis Ababa University is the last but one in the list with the lowest staff-student ratio. It is indicated in Table 2.4 that the Jimma Junior College of Agriculture is second to the Junior College of Commerce in the highest staff-student ratio. This indicates that the overriding feature in most of these colleges is the fact that the large classes discourage teachers to devote their time to improve the quality of their teaching and undertake research (Seyoum 1987).

Institution	staff/student ratio
Addis Ababa University	1:16.5
Asmara University	1:20.5
Alemaya University	1:19.1
Ambo J.C. of Agriculture	1:16.3
Jimma J.C. of Agriculture	1:31.0
Kotobe College of Teacher Education	1:25.7
Junior College of Commerce	1:51.0

Table 2.4 Staff-student ratio in Higher Education in 1988/89 A.Y.

Source: Higher Education Main Department 1990 *Statistics on Higher Education*

Another problem caused by the above factors is the attrition rate. Despite the fact that access to Addis Ababa University has gradually become more difficult than ever before, due to the high grade level requirements in the *ESLCE*, the national school leaving examination, the attrition rate in the university has steadily increased.

Year	Attrition (per cent)
1969-70	14.4
1970-71	10.0
1981-82	16.4
1983-84	18.9

Table 2.5 Attrition rate in Addis Ababa University

Source: Addis Ababa University Planning Office 1985

Table 2.5 indicates that the attrition rate increased by about 19 per cent in 1983/84 academic year. For 1988/89, according to Higher Education Main Department report, the degree programmes in Addis Ababa University with the highest/lowest attrition rates were the Department of Educational Psychology (27.6 per cent), History (27.1 per cent), School of Pharmacy (23.3 per cent), Faculty of Medicine (0.2 per cent), Bahir Dar (1.0 per cent) and Veterinary Science (1.9 per cent). Seyoum (1987) states that in 1983/4, out of the 38,645 students who sat for the *ESLCE* only 8,850 passed and out of these only 4,378 could meet the university's requirements for access. Out of the 4,378 students, 31.6 per cent came from Addis Ababa, 15.2 per cent from Shoa, 8.7 per cent from Harar, 6.5 per cent from Gondar, and 5.7 per cent from Tigray (see section 4.32 Chapter 4 for the current disparity in sex, region, etc of university entrants). Table 2.6 gives a full picture of the situation. The slight differences in figures between the above mentioned by Seyoum (1987) and those in Table 2.6 below are more or less insignificant.

year	students enrolled for ESLCE	students admitted	adm/enr ratio
1982/83	36042	6460	0.18
1983/84	38004	6675	0.18
1984/85	40363	8276	0.21
1985/86	40223	6411	0.16
1986/87	41468	6115	0.15
1987/88	39511	5744	0.15
total	235611	39981	0.17

Table 2.6 Ratio of regular students admitted to institutions of higher learning

Source: Ministry of Education 1988

In an attempt to phase out old courses and produce as many graduates as the country was felt to need, in 1978/79 academic year, Addis Ababa University made a series of reorganisations in course offerings and it introduced the term system, despite staff objections, mainly to reduce the number of years required for the undergraduate programme and to train as many students as possible within a short period of time. Marxist-Leninist philosophy and political economy were introduced to the first year course offering list. Staff were also obliged to undergo reorientation programmes intended to make them familiar with the principles of Marxism-Leninism so that they could promote the philosophy in their teaching. The Revolutionary Ethiopia Youth Association was made responsible for the perpetuation of the contemporary ideology among university students. Political discussion forums for staff were held on Mondays and attendance was compulsory. In 1985 all staff and students were sent out to help build huts for peasant settlers in Gojjam and Illubabor regions. Lessons had to be discontinued for one semester. Besides these, various committees proliferated and staff were supposed to be involved (Abebe 1987) as this became one of the basic criteria for promotion. Classes grew larger as budgetary problems discouraged staff development and training.

Suddenly, the above prescriptions - the term system, the weekly political discussion sessions, and the offering of Marxist-Leninist philosophy and political economy - were abandoned, as fast as they were introduced, in 1991 when the policy of the government changed. Again, with the usual rush, in 1990/91 academic year students were sent out for military training in camps to defend "the unity and territorial integrity of the motherland." The long-term effect of such hasty implementations of government policy in Addis Ababa University, which claims to be a centre of *academia*, is yet to be seen. However, such a series of hasty and unwarranted changes only helped to deplete the already meagre budget allocated to the university (for the effects of this situation on the present research see section 1.3 Chapter 1 above, section 4.1 Chapter 4 below). It is understandable that these moves have seriously affected the quality of education offered by the university since the late 1970's.

2.5 English Language Teaching in the Addis Ababa University

When modern education in imperial Ethiopia took shape, the ultimate aim of the educational establishment was fundamentally to enhance the creation of a modern state. This was also the guiding principle of education when the University College of Addis Ababa was inaugurated in 1951. The University College of Addis Ababa took English as a medium of instruction because, among other things, the language was accepted as the *de facto* language of education in the country; the founders were expatriate scholars, and the curriculum, syllabus, teaching materials were mainly imported from Britain and, later, from America (Teshome 1990; Girma 1992).

Apparently, a university operating in the English language medium would require of its students a high level of linguistic competence to study in that language (section 1.1 Chapter 1 above). At the initial stages, this seemed not to pose a problem. However, as it has been indicated above (section 2.3) in the mid-sixties, as the student population started to increase, there were complaints about students' poor background knowledge in English (Rogers 1967, 1969). It was felt that the major reasons for students' poor competence in the English language was caused by poor teacher qualifications, lack of appropriate teaching materials, and backward teaching methodology in high schools (Kehoe 1964). In 1967, Lee (1968) studied the reading comprehension ability of students and the readability of their textbooks. His subjects were drawn from grade nine and first year university. He used the Davis Test or Metropolitan Test (test designed for American children) and the Flesch readability formula to assess reading comprehension and the readability of selected course books respectively. His results indicated that grade nine students had a reading ability of middle of primary school and their textbooks had a readability index ranging from lower primary level up to and university level. The reading ability of first year students was of lower secondary school and their textbooks' readability ranged from last year of secondary school up to the upper levels of university. Langmuir (1968; 1971) found similar results regarding the reading abilities of university students.

It is to be noted that with the changes mentioned in section 2.3 above, the *ESLCE*, which

remained the sole requirement for university entrance, consisted of only one English language examination paper, as of 1968, and the paper emphasised the knowledge of the grammar of the language. It was recommended that the *ESLCE* English paper be changed from the subjective to objective type and the literature part was to be suspended "until it could be decided what literature to teach, whether to stress reading or literature, how to test this material, how to secure adequate texts ..." (Madsen 1968; 1976:489). Along with this, the emphasis on reading ability in this national examination gradually diminished. However, this move did not ameliorate the seriousness of students' linguistic problem. Students joining the university were found to be linguistically incompetent to cope with their academic studies, and the incompetence became more glaring from year to year.

The fundamental aim for the introduction of service English courses at the university level was to help students develop their English language ability so that they could study effectively and operate as university students. Initially, there were no standard textbooks for the courses that were designed to be given in three or four semesters. The first set of textbooks produced were the two volumes of *College English* by Rogers, Tan and Hutton (1967). The course books and the courses were meant to be temporary and remedial, only to last two to three years. Jarvis (1969) expresses the contemporary recommended language teaching methodology in assessing the two volumes. He asserts

> examples of vocabulary and structures, especially those known to cause difficulty to the Ethiopian student, are provided in context and are then drilled extensively. Emphasis is placed on fluent oral response, and intensive controlled writing practice is included.

Asfaw and Murison-Bowie (1976:426), however, argue that "on the whole, the books make wide use of available techniques ... The books' treatment of grammar, however, fails to develop the learner's ability in this field systematically. Such explanations as are given tend to be incomplete and confusing, and the amount of drilling and exercising of grammatical points is unlikely to be sufficient for the remedy of common errors."

The remedial work was not phased out. In 1969, the two textbooks were made available to senior high schools in the hope that the university English language service courses

would phase out. For some time, the service English courses were offered without any standard course books. Instructors used a set of hand-outs (Asfaw and Murison-Bowie 1976:428-9). In 1978 the *Freshman Intensive Remote English*, or *FIRE*, by Mortimer, was introduced. It had separate volumes for arts and science students. The volumes had an ESP orientation and consisted of a teacher's book and students' workbooks, but for various reasons, *FIRE* was dropped and the courses were again taught without any course books until 1985 when the present two volumes of the Freshman English courses - Freshman English 101A and Freshman English 101B - were produced mostly based on the hand-outs that were in use.

Each course book consists of six units. Each unit has a reading comprehension passage, followed by a few multiple choice and wh-questions on the reading passage. The second section consists of vocabulary exercises, mostly fill-in type. The third section provides the definition of a selected grammatical item, such as the simple present tense followed by exercises mostly on sentence-level, like providing the appropriate form of a given verb, similar to those which appear in *Living English Structure* by Allen (1963). The last section is on writing.

In broad terms, the course books have proved to be inappropriate in their form of presentation and deficient in their content. The reading passages are mostly too long and uninteresting. The questions on the reading comprehension mostly focus on the students' ability to recall and can easily be answered either without reading the passage in question or looking back at the body of the passage. The exercises on vocabulary development do not fare better than those on reading. They are mostly fill-in types. Typically, a list of vocabulary items taken from the previous reading passage is provided with isolated sentences with blanks. Students are supposed to identify the word that could fill the gap in a given sentence. Similarly, the section on grammar takes a certain grammatical notion, like the passive, provides a definition with accompanying sentences to demonstrate the point of discussion. The exercises on the structure and usage part mostly encourage the mere study of verb forms. This section is basically structural and there is no attempt at least to exploit grammar to generate some meaningful discourse (Widdowson 1986).

Most of these points were mentioned by Freshman English instructors in a questionnaire administered to appraise the effectiveness of the course books (Gebremedhin 1988).

The causes for the ineffectiveness of the service English courses do not only lie in the course books. Major problems on a macro-level have been discussed in detail above. It can also be stated that besides the nature and content of the service English course books, (which is fundamentally more devoted to usage than use), there are problems in the design of the syllabus and the process of evaluation. The courses are no longer claimed as temporary that would soon phase out, but the general emphasis on grammar is apparently as prominent as before. In the introduction to the first volume, Freshman English 101A, it is stated that "the aim (of these courses) is to review and revise the ground rules of English structure and usage while at the same time extending the students' active and passive command of the language" (Conroy 1985:introduction to Freshman English 101A).

2.6 Research on service English courses in Addis Ababa University

There are now indications that the service English courses have not been effective in helping students to cope with the rigors of academic studies. It seems that the course objectives mentioned above are not informed by the general linguistic problems students face in their schools, and thus, it is unlikely that these courses could fulfil the expressed aims of the university mentioned in section 2.4 in Chapter 2 above.

In 1968 the English Department introduced two versions of the service English courses. One set, designed to be given in four semesters, two hours per week, was planned for students whose grades in the *ESLCE* English Language Examination was ***C*** and below. The other set, designed to be given in three semesters - three hours a week, was given to students whose grades in English in the national examination was ***B*** and above. The assumption was that those who were good at English could be given more advanced language tasks. Still, the other group, though considered weak, could start from easier tasks and, through the materials, could improve their ability in the language and build up to the same linguistic level as the other group. However, the follow-up of the results of

the study indicated that there was not a significant difference in linguistic improvement between the two groups (Mosback 1977).

Morris (1982) felt that the service English courses could be improved if they were based on the actual assessment of the academic needs of the university students. She made a survey of all the academic needs of the students using Munby's *Communicative Syllabus Design* (1978) model. Her findings indicated that the demands for the receptive skills were higher than the demands for the productive skills. Her study, however, did not dwell on the general background knowledge students had when they joined the university, what they lacked and what they wanted to learn in specific terms.

Hailom (1982) designed an experiment to study the effectiveness of the communicative approach in teaching English conditional sentences. He stated that there was a marked improvement in the results of the experimental group that used the communicative approach to study English conditional sentences. Similarly, Gebremedhin (1984) undertook an experimental study to examine the effectiveness of two second language teaching approaches - the Language Acquisition and the Conscious Rule Learning Approaches. While the former emphasised the use of language learning activities to acquire the language, the latter was basically devoted to structural rule explanation (or usage) and the learning of these rules by students[4]. The comparative study revealed that students who followed the Language Acquisition Approach performed better than those who followed the Conscious Rule Learning Approach. It was indicated that the language learning activities promoted in the students the motivation for effective language learning. Haile Michael (1984) studied the effectiveness of the communicative approach in teaching reading in English to first year social science students. He undertook a comparative study of the traditional and communicative approaches in promoting effective reading. He concluded that students in the experimental group became better readers than those in the control group who followed the conventional method.

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[4]These ideas are expounded in greater detail in Krashen and Terrell 1983; Krashen 1981; Prabhu 1985, 1987; Johnson 1982; Brumfit 1984; and Widdowson 1990:144*ff*. As pointed out, the basis of the language teaching approach is that learners will acquire language effectively if they could be engaged in a series of activities that promote the use of the language and that would facilitate a supportive learning environment.

Tsegaye (1981) used the fog index and the cloze test to investigate the reading comprehension ability of Addis Ababa University first year students and the readability of their course books. The assumptions for the fog index formula for establishing the readability of a book rely on the assumption that a long sentence with three-syllable words is more difficult than a short sentence with few or no three-syllable words. The fog index of a sampled passage is established by dividing the number of words by the number of sentences in the passage and adding this to the number of three-syllable words occurring in the passage. The result is multiplied by 0.4 to yield the fog index of the selected passage. In short, the fog index of a selected passage is computed as follows (Alderson and Urquhart 1984:xxii):

$$\frac{\text{number of words}}{\text{number of sentences}} + \frac{\text{number of 3-syllable words}}{\text{number of words}} \times \frac{100}{1} \times 0.4$$

In other words, the fog index of a given book is established by adding the fog indices of all selected passages (usually of 100 words length) and dividing the sum by the number of the passages selected (Klare 1969; Gilliland 1972; see also section 3.2221 Chapter 3 for a general review of readability formulae). The result is interpreted as 12 and below as easy, 13-16, undergraduate and 16 and above as postgraduate.

Tsegaye found out that the social science first year students were on the *frustrational level* when tested on their geography textbook which, he reported, had a readability level of grade eleven (see section 5.222 and section 5.322 Chapter 5 for the results of the current study regarding the cloze tests on the geography course book). The Natural Science first year students were found on the *instructional level* of comprehension when tested on their chemistry course book which had a readability level of second year university (see Cripwell 1976 for the definition of the terms; section 3.2221 Chapter 3 below). He used the fifth word deletion for the cloze test.

Similarly, Mendida (1988) indicated that there was a gap between the actual reading ability and what was expected of the first year students in Bahir Dar Teachers' College. He used the cloze test and Fry's formula (1968) to establish his conclusions. Molla

(1987) assessed the reading speed of first year students and he claimed that they were slow readers.

In February 1988, the Office of the Freshman Programme of the College of Social Sciences reported that the first year social science students' performance in English was the lowest, followed by philosophy. It was added that students did well in statistics and economics followed by geography. Most dismissal cases had the grade of ***F*** in Freshman English. Figures were not released; however, this assertion was said to be supported by the number of students sitting for a supplemental examination in Freshman English and the complaints of most Freshman English instructors of having to do a lot of re-marking when they fail students in the course. Similarly, most Freshman English instructors (Gebremedhin 1988) reported that the standard course books for the service courses were inadequate and inappropriate. Most instructors mentioned the major points raised above about the service English course books to justify their comments.

A base-line study for this research (Gebremedhin 1988) was conducted in the second semester of 1987/88 academic year to find out whether students in the third year of the College of Social Sciences had benefitted much from the service English courses in their use of the reading strategies and their ability to understand their course books. The students were third year history, management and sociology majors. These were selected because it was assumed that students in these three departments were expected to do a lot of reading and writing both in simple and complex prose. Moreover, these students had completed their *dosage* of the service English courses required of all Addis Ababa University students. The students were given texts selected from their respective course books (see ***Appendix 1.1***) and they were asked to make short notes as they would presumably do for their courses. The original plan was then to ask students to reconstruct their notes to the original and to compare any deficiencies in decoding. However, this plan was abandoned because most students did not write short notes - such as phrases or the like. They copied the original material in chunks (***Appendix 1.2***). Thus it was planned to assess their notes from the point of view of their ability to *feel* text organisation, distinguish between main points and supporting details, extract important

ideas for study and further reference, and to transcode information in a suitable and economical way.

In broad terms, the notes (***Appendix 1.2***) seem to indicate that most of the students are poor readers. Most students seem to read word by word. Their notes suggest that: firstly, most students, even though they are senior students, are not aware of the common reading strategies; secondly, they are mostly poor bottom-up processors (section 3.2222 and section 3.2223 Chapter 3 below), they are not able to see the distinction between the main points and supporting details, the author's point of view or flow of ideas (specially the history and sociology students); thirdly, they are poor in their English; and finally, they seem to lack the confidence in their ability to operate in their own English.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the basis of the Ethiopian educational system since 1941 with special emphasis devoted to the role of the English language as a medium of instruction. It has been pointed out that the preliminary aim of the Ethiopian modern educational system was to facilitate the process of centralisation and modernisation (Markakis 1974). While the imperial government promoted an elitist type of education to produce skilled manpower for its bureaucracy, the military government underscored mass education to perpetuate the Marxist-Leninist ideology (Sjostrom and Sjostrom 1983; Schwab 1985).

As has been pointed out, the imperial educational system was based on an imported curriculum that ostensibly embodied Western value systems and priorities (Trudeau 1967; Teshome 1979; 1990; Fassil 1990; Girma 1992). This entailed the dependence to a large extent on expatriate staff and imported teaching materials which taxed the country's revenue and curtailed the government's ability to open more schools to reach the rural population in all parts of the country. The educational system featured conspicuous unevenness in urban/rural, regional and sex representations accompanied by an acute shortage of teaching personnel and increasing student attrition rate. Education was highly centralised and it was aimed at accentuating the so-called 'traditional pattern of assimilation' - through the Orthodox Church and the Amharic language (Markakis 1974).

However, as has been pointed out by researchers, its relevance to the basic needs of the Ethiopian population was questionable because it promoted a 'foreign' value system and it disregarded the diverse socio-cultural and linguistic realities of the country - the fundamental basis for what the students bring with them when they join the educational establishment.

As it has been indicated above, the educational policy had a strong bearing on the classroom situation. The teachers represented the authority and their task was to promulgate the 'desired' value system and students were supposed to accept this without questioning. All decisions regarding educational policy and implementation were basically top-down - and although most teacher-student related problems were not addressed, general educational policy decisions were made 'for' them. The general educational objective of producing skilled man-power for the bureaucracy gradually became not tuned to the fundamental needs of the country as the educational establishment was not effective in bringing about the much needed socio-political and economic changes in the day-to-day activities of the majority of the society that remained relatively traditional and illiterate. Gradually, it became evident that the country's backward economy was unable to absorb school graduates (Gilks 1975).

The educational policy of the military government (since 1974) was basically similar to its predecessor's. The apparent difference seems to lie on the less reliance on expatriate staff and imported teaching materials though these were by no means satisfied from local sources. Education was meant to be used as a tool for enhancing production, encouraging scientific research and promoting the political ideology (Last 1983; Schwab 1985). As Hoerr (cited in McNab 1987:12) states "the country now finds that the internationally mixed educational model which it imported is (a) of questionable socio-economic relevance to a largely rural agricultural population and (b) highly inequitable in terms of educational opportunity". This awareness, however, did not encourage the military government to introduce appropriate changes in the formal educational system.

Apparently, "Ethiopia follows a highly centralized system of education in which curricula are planned centrally and implemented throughout the country in a uniform manner. The

same textbooks, teachers' guides, etc., that are prescribed for particular grades are used all over the country" (British Council 1986). The government was only able to provide untrained or undertrained teachers with diminishing school supplies to very large classes where only half day schooling was available (Last 1983; McNab 1987; 1989). It seems paradoxical for the government in that on the one hand, it desired to employ education for accentuating central power by encouraging the use of Amharic as medium of instruction in all levels (Markakis 1974; Cooper 1976; McNab 1989) and thus reduce the apparent influence of the socio-cultural and linguistic diversities in all spheres of socio-economic and political activities, and on the other, it aimed at making education, or at least basic education, accessible for all and thus bearing the accountability for financing such a project, though without the capacity to shoulder it. As Abbott (1989:17) contends, "the government could, if it only put its mind to it, decentralize education sufficiently for all or most of its primary school children to start their schooling and become literate in their mother tongue."

Addis Ababa University, as an institution of higher learning in the country shares most of the drawbacks of the educational constraints mentioned above. Established in 1951 as the University College of Addis Ababa to give priority to the promotion of the "Ethiopian heritage as expressed in its history, languages, the arts and music, (and to meet) the needs of the country" (Seyoum 1987:56), Addis Ababa University has persistently endeavoured to perpetuate the Ethiopian culture and tradition as defined by the contemporary ideologies of the past two governments (Teshome 1990; Fassil 1990; Girma 1992). It has also tried to relate its academic programmes to the pertinent needs of the country. Such a task apparently necessitated the opening of new or the reorganization of old colleges and faculties, the revision and modernisation of its curricula, and the founding of new programmes (Abebe 1987). Nevertheless, these ventures coupled with the various educational problems at all levels (Last 1983) have precipitated the deterioration of the quality of the educational output (Abebe 1987). Operating with meagre budgetary resources, mostly inexperienced staff (both in research undertakings and pedagogy), inadequate and sometimes inappropriate teaching materials, and a high staff-student ratio, the university has reached a stage where it characteristically relies on the traditional lecture method - thus depriving students of a favourable learning environment - in its

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undergraduate programmes (Abebe 1987; Seyoum 1987). This might have contributed to the increasing student attrition rate in the university (Table 2.5 section 2.44 above). Abebe (1987:15) contends that if "teaching as telling" is not abandoned and "a learning atmosphere which encourages students to accept some obligation for, and to take some initiative in self education" is assumed, the present trend is unlikely to be curbed.

One of the causes for the lowering in the quality of education in the country in general and the university in particular is alleged to be the use of English as a medium of instruction (Rogers 1967; 1989; Stoddart 1986; McNab 1989). It has been made clear that the establishment of modern educational system entailed the use of the English language as a medium of instruction because (a) the teachers were mostly expatriates, (b) the materials were written in English, and (c) the imperial government adopted English as a second language for its new bureaucracy (Tesfaye and Taylor 1976). Despite this, not much was done to improve the teaching of the English language in the country. Many English teachers complained about the gradual decline in the students' ability to use English for their studies (Kehoe 1964; Rogers 1967, 1969).

The earlier attempts to improve the teaching of English in the country focused on (a) delaying the introduction of English to the Ethiopian educational system (Rogers 1969), the writing of a new series of English language teaching materials - *The New Oxford English Course for Ethiopia* - informed by the contemporary approach to language teaching, that is, an oral approach with extensive drills in structures before writing at least in the earlier grades (Madsen 1968), and the use of objective tests and the dropping of the literature component of the English language examination paper of the ***ESLCE*** (Madsen 1976). However, even after about twenty years, as McNab (1989) and Stoddart (1986) indicate, the English medium schooling and English language teaching seem not to have improved much.

Similarly, in the university, researchers indicate that students find studying their academic courses in English very difficult. Mosback (1977) claims that the service English courses offered with the fundamental objective of helping students to study their courses in English are ineffective and a waste of resources. Others state that first year students'

ability to read and listen in English is very low (Tsegaye 1981; Hicks 1989). The service English courses have not been fundamentally improved since their introduction in the mid sixties. They are basically structuralist (Jarvis 1969; Conroy 1985). The course books for the service English courses are inappropriate in all aspects of language teaching methodology - no sections for developing the listening ability of students (though believed to be essential for their lectures), no explicit guidelines for the selection of the reading texts (and inappropriate exercises for developing students' reading ability in English for academic purposes), and no specific guidelines for the selection of the structural or lexical items that students are supposed to learn in order to succeed in the Freshman English final examination - which some students find more difficult to pass than their other academic courses (section 2.6).

The current study investigates a possible approach to developing students reading ability in English for academic purposes. It is based on the premise that by individualising reading (section 3.3 Chapter 3), students will not only improve their ability to read in English, but they will also be better equipped with the 'tools' of learning (section 1.1 Chapter 1) than ever before to cope with their academic studies in English (section 5.2 and 5.3 Chapter 5).

CHAPTER THREE

Review of related literature

3.1 Introduction

In the preceding chapter, it has been contended that despite the conspicuous socio-cultural and linguistic diversities precipitated in the course of the country's history (section 2.2 Chapter 2), modern education in Ethiopia, initially founded on an imported Western value system, was aimed at accentuating centralization and promoting modernization and development (Markakis 1974). However, the English medium schooling seems not to have succeeded in generating the anticipated development. Like in most developing countries, the shortcomings of the educational system, according to Hallak (cited in Abbott 1992:173-4) include, as has been mentioned above (section 2.3 Chapter 2), overcentralisation, overcrowding, under-funding, irrelevant curricula, teacher shortages, lack of textbooks, high pupil dropout rates, drab and ill-equipped buildings, teaching in two or even three shifts and similar problems (Last 1983 confirms this). Abbott (1992) suggests that English-medium schooling should be added to the list.

Undoubtedly, these conditions seriously affect the quality of education. They significantly limit the learning exposure of individual learners. And whether it is mother-tongue or English medium schooling, as long as these factors are prevailing it might not be appropriate to expect any positive educational changes. Similarly, a proposal for the substitution of the English medium schooling by mother-tongue schooling, as Abbott (1992) suggests, may not provide a fundamental solution to the apparent educational crisis in many countries. Thus, it might be wrong to rest the entire blame solely on the English medium schooling in most educational levels, for all the failures in the educational system (Kennedy 1989; Last 1983). Moreover, English language teaching in Ethiopia operated under the following serious constraints: limited competence in English of school teachers (not only subject teachers but also English language teachers), lack of appropriate training

of English language teachers, lack of English language teaching materials (both in quantity and quality) and overcrowded English language classes that operate on a half-day shift system. It is also suggested that the possibility of switching to Amharic medium schooling might have contributed to the weakening of English language teaching in the country (Tesfaye and Taylor 1976).

Asfaw and Murison-Bowie (1976:433) took the idea of a switch to Amharic from English as a medium of instruction cautiously and they questioned its plausibility by stating that

> there will be the conflicting political issues as well as the educational dilemmas of whether to use a 'national' language or an 'international' one for secondary education. The problems of documentation and wider communication that are already being faced in the Sudan with Arabic and in Tanzania with Swahili will have to be borne in mind in making a decision to use Amharic as a medium of instruction.

Similarly, Rubin (1984:5) warns that "a programme which changes the school language without changing the society is directed only at the symptom and not at the cause of the problem. Indeed, many remedial education programmes are ineffectual because of their isolation from real life situations." Incidentally, the real life situations of the large majority of the Ethiopian population have not been satisfactorily appraised and no significant attempts have been made to adapt the educational system to the fundamental needs of the people. Thus, all these factors have not only negatively affected the quality of education, but they have also seriously constrained the teaching of English in the country. It is paradoxical that on the one hand, it is officially sanctioned that English remains a medium of instruction in secondary and tertiary levels, and on the other hand, no significant attempt has been made to improve the quality of the teaching of English in schools despite the fact that English still remains the key language in the teaching and learning process both in secondary and tertiary levels.

It has been pointed out (section 1.1 Chapter 1; section 2.5 Chapter 2) the service English courses in Addis Ababa University were reinstated to help students make up for their English language deficiencies mostly caused by the factors mentioned above. However, current research (section 2.6 Chapter 2) indicates the ineffectiveness of these

courses in developing students' linguistic and reading competence. The remedial English language courses seem not to address the right questions (Ellis 1987), that is, how to relate the language courses to the every day life of the students and how to help them develop their background knowledge to pursue their academic courses in English. In light of the fact that students joining the university seem not to have adequate background knowledge - both schematic and systemic - and are expected to read academic texts in English, the service English courses offered in the university have failed to satisfy this felt need (section 2.6 and section 2.7, Chapter 2).

Reading in English for academic purposes is supposedly the major task of social science first year students, and possibly of all the students in the university. This is probably why reading has been allotted a major section in the service English course books. In fact, the implicit objective of the courses is to teach students to effectively read their textbooks in English. However, as indicated (section 1.1, Chapter 1; section 2.5 and section 2.6, Chapter 2), the reading parts in the service English courses are not appropriately designed, and hence, uninformed by current methods of developing effective reading for academic purposes, to promote the apparently dichotomous learning elements - the *analytic skill-getting* and the *experiential skill-using* (Allen, 1986:3, prefers to reject the dichotomy), or the micro-language learning and the macro-language use (Rivers 1983). They are too limited both in scope and approach to foster what Widdowson (1986:41) calls the *educationally required* (section 2.3 and section 2.6 Chapter 2) and the *pedagogically desirable*. It is admitted that it is not easy to create harmony between the two (what the students are supposed to learn according to the national curriculum, and how teachers should teach what is required). Different researchers recommend different approaches to language teaching (Widdowson 1983; Krashen and Terrell 1983; Prabhu 1985; Allen 1986; Dickinson 1987, to mention some).

This study endeavours to combine both - an approach to developing reading ability informed by the country's educational needs and drawbacks, and appropriate theoretical constructs of pedagogy. The main aim of the approach is not to look at the educational needs as discrete elements to qualify learning tasks but to reconcile current learning theories to bear on the process of developing learners' ability to read their academic

course books in English as successfully as they could. The approach highlights learners' contributions in the efforts to help them develop their ability to learn to read and to read to learn. Learning to read or reading to learn, as a purpose, is not considered in order to delimit or specify learning tasks in a form of discrete elements (such as structure, function, notion or skill, or whatever), but to help the learners to *experiment* with their learning strategies (through learner training) while developing their background knowledge or schema - as a prerequisite for learning to read and reading to learn (Smith 1982). As Grabe (1986) points out, the achievement of this background knowledge, or what he calls *critical mass of knowledge*, is a stage where a student stops learning to read and only reads to learn.

There are profound reasons for emphasizing reading in the syllabus of the service English courses in the university. Carrell (1988a:1) stresses that "without solid reading proficiency, second language readers cannot perform at levels they must in order to succeed" and she recommends that effective reading is essential for students in EFL contexts, those at advanced levels of proficiency, and those with a need for English for academic purposes. In other words, it is through reading that most students in EFL contexts, such as in Ethiopia, come in touch with the language, discover sources for their academic study and emancipate themselves from overdependence on lectures. They can verify what others propose; defend their view-points and develop the self-confidence in their methods of study and search for knowledge. All these learning activities depend on the ability to read in English; and the prerequisite for effective reading or successful interaction with a given text relies on the students' background knowledge of both English and their academic courses. The notion of reading in English for academic purposes embodies alternative theoretical assumptions informing both, to use Widdowson's terms (1983), the learning *purpose* and language *use*, to enable students to learn English to read their academic course books. On the surface, this task seems easy to pin down: the purpose is to read academic texts (in a very limited sense), and thus, identify the language needed for this purpose. Truly speaking, this is a gross oversimplification of the task, but the present service English courses seem to be way behind even in meeting the basics.

Reading in English for academic purposes, thus, embodies both the theoretical

assumptions underpinning the reading process and the reading strategies employed to cope with texts to be learned, and the various approaches for developing such a competence. Each of the three major models of reading discussed in this chapter - bottom-up data driven, top-down concept driven and interactive schema theoretic models - embodies a specific view of reading and the process of learning to develop background knowledge in order to effectively read. This chapter investigates briefly these major theories advanced to explain the reading process with reference to learning to develop background knowledge (schema) and explores the feasibility and accessibility of one possible approach, by relating it to an appropriate reading theory, to develop learners' reading ability. It underscores reading as an interactive process - involving various reader-text related factors - and focuses on the essential contribution of the learner-reader to the process of developing his/her background knowledge.

3.2 The reading process

It has been pointed out (section 2.3, Chapter 2) that traditionally reading was merely taken to facilitate the study of grammar in Ethiopia. In most instances, students were made to read aloud without having to make any efforts to understand what they were reading (Rogers 1967). They were made to memorize the meanings of words, usually given in glossaries, selected from the reading passages which were very long. This was usually the way the *Readers* (mentioned in section 2.3, Chapter 2) were handled in most Ethiopian schools.

Similarly, especially in the USA, before the 1970s reading was essentially taken as subsidiary to and reinforcement for oral language instruction. As indicated below, structuralist linguistics paid more attention to the study of phonology, and with the influence of behaviourism in psychology, students were made to focus on oral skills, particularly pronunciation. As Silberstein (cited in Grabe 1991) indicates, under the influence of audio-lingualism, reading was taught simply to aid in examining grammar and vocabulary or to practise pronunciation. It was this type of teaching approach that was recommended for Ethiopian schools by English language teaching experts (see section 2.3 and section 2.5, Chapter 2) during the same time to help students improve their English

(Tesfaye and Taylor 1976). It is to be noted that in the traditional Ethiopian Church education, reading was solely taken to be oral, tied to letter-to-letter and word to sentence pronunciation (section 2.3,Chapter 2; Haile Gabriel 1976).

The early works on ESL/EFL reading are dominated by the view of reading as a decoding activity, or what is popularly termed by researchers as the bottom up data driven approach to reading. That is, reading is considered mainly as a "decoding process of reconstructing the author's intended meaning via recognizing the printed letters and words, and building up a meaning for a text from the smallest textual units at the 'bottom' (letters and words) to larger and larger units at the 'top' (phrases, clauses, intersentential linkages)" (Carrell 1988a:1) - thus, the emphasis on phonology. Meaning is assumed to be in the text, contained in the form of these textual constraints that are hierarchically ordered, and the reader's task is to attend to these constraints to extract the writer's intended meaning. Because of its pattern of approach to information processing, this procedure is a bottom up data driven processing since the processor (the learner, reader, etc.) is assumed to attend to "perceptions, organize them, and then extract meaning from them" (Clark 1987:59).

The teacher of reading is then supposed to follow this theoretical outline to develop his/her students' reading ability. With the aid of a set of procedures based on audio-lingualism and behaviourism (as a basis for learning), the teacher is supposed to provide his/her students with drills on linguistic elements starting from the smallest textual item and building up to higher textual elements with emphasis given to the mastery of letter-sound relationship to develop pronunciation (see for instance, Lado 1945; Bloomfield 1942; Rivers 1968). The development of pronunciation and the mastery of these discrete textual elements is supposed to help develop linguistic ability. It is argued that, since meaning is assumed to be in the text (or too abstract to pin down, as Bloomfield 1942 contended), the vital element for language learning (or for developing background knowledge) is limited to proficiency in pronunciation.

However, it is interesting to note that the view that reading is parasitic on linguistic competence, at least on the lower skills, is still a topic of debate. Some researchers feel

that there might be a linguistic threshold for effective reading (Alderson 1984) and, thus suggest teaching students to develop this aspect of background knowledge before they can effectively read, while others argue that any deficiency in one aspect, say reading ability, is compensated for by the mastery of the other, the linguistic knowledge, and vice versa (Swaffar and others 1991). The inconclusiveness of available research evidence regarding this makes it difficult which one to give prominence to - the linguistic aspect or the reading skills - to help first year Addis Ababa University students (who generally seem deficient in both, anyway) to read their course books in English. Of course, both components will generate further questions such as whether or not they can be developed separately, what linguistic aspects to teach (aspects of *use* or *usage*, Widdowson 1983), what reading skills are (section 3.2222 below) and how to develop them.

The educational practice described above, especially regarding the approach to developing reading ability, was challenged by new developments related to emerging educational needs and the proposal of a different way of explaining the reading process. The former was related to the crucial need of non-English speaking students joining British and American universities to learn to read and follow their academic courses in English. The latter was related to a new approach to the reading process, based on cognitive psychology and psycholinguistics, expounded by Goodman.

In the 1970s American and British universities found that the contemporary audio-lingual method, with its emphasis on oral language skills assumed to enhance reading achievement, inappropriate to prepare a large number of ESL students with advanced academic skills required for the university (Carrell 1988a; Grabe 1991). They had to look for other ways of helping their students to cope with their academic reading in English. The universities started to design their own materials for teaching reading for academic purposes without any clear theoretical guidance on reading. In other words, in order to satisfy the felt need, that is, to enable non-English speaking students pursuing their studies in the British and American universities to effectively read and follow their academic courses, "ESL instruction changed in the early 1970s to emphasize advanced reading and writing instruction, albeit without a strong theoretical framework to guide practice" (Grabe 1991:376).

Similarly, many researchers and teachers appreciated the relevance of reading in language teaching and responded to the new way of explaining the reading process advanced by Goodman in their search for an effective approach to reading instruction, especially in ESL contexts. Goodman's proposal of a new theory of reading was not as such in response to ESL/EFL reading needs. His major preoccupation was mainly to prove the earlier stipulation about the reading process as wrong and to defend a new theory of reading based on the assumptions of cognitive psychology. He argued that reading was not primarily a decoding process - picking up information from the page in a letter-by-letter, word-by-word manner - it was rather a selective process, or a 'psycholinguistic guessing game' (Goodman 1976). Efficient readers utilize the knowledge they bring to the reading situation and then proceed by predicting information, sampling the text and confirming the prediction. Smith (1982) agreed with Goodman and added that sampling was effective because of the extensive redundancy built into natural language as well as the abilities of readers to make the necessary inferences from their background knowledge.

According to Grabe (1991:376*f*), the two significant attempts to translate the above approach, sometimes referred to as the psycholinguistic approach, to ESL reading instruction include that of Clarke and Silberstein (1977) and Coady (1979). Clarke and Silberstein, by deriving the implications of Goodman's psycholinguistic approach to reading, took reading as an active process of comprehending and emphasized that students needed to be taught effective strategies of reading such as guessing from context, defining expectations, making inferences about the text, and skimming ahead to fill in the context, because that was what fluent L1[1] readers, according to Goodman, were observed to be doing while reading. They suggested that teachers of reading should provide students with various effective approaches to texts such as helping them define goals and strategies for reading, use prereading activities to enhance conceptual readiness, and define strategies to deal with difficulties in syntax, vocabulary and organizational structure. In short, students were encouraged to make predictions by attending to limited textual samples to confirm their hypotheses.

[1]L1 stands for mother tongue or first language.

Likewise, Coady (1979) adapted Goodman's theory of L1 reading to suit second language learners. The overemphasis on reader contributions to reading without paying due attention to linguistic constraints, that were apparent in ESL[2] contexts anyway, led Coady to conceive L2[3] reading as consisting of process strategies, background knowledge and conceptual abilities. Process strategies, such as word identification, were employed by beginning readers while more abstract conceptual abilities and effective use of background knowledge characterized skilled readers. In other words, Coady proposed that the background knowledge of ESL readers interacts with their conceptual abilities and process strategies to enable them to comprehend a given text.

The various attempts made towards helping ESL/EFL[4] students studying in British and American universities, in particular, to read their academic course books in English effectively coupled with developments in fields such as linguistics, psychology and education gave rise to a proliferation of views and theories on ESL/EFL teaching methodology, syllabus and materials development. Jordan (1989:155) relates that "a large number of the investigations into aspects of reading in the 1970s, especially in the USA, concentrated upon EST[5]: they were largely concerned with an analysis of discourse, and, in particular, rhetorical functions. These studies were closely tied to specific subjects."

Moreover, Goodman's theoretical stipulation of the reading process triggered the flow of a mass of research on the process of reading, on the one hand, and the methods of applying reading research output to the teaching of reading in English as a second or foreign language for academic purposes. The explanation of the nature of the reading process and the role of background knowledge in reading is pursued by researchers in the broad domains of cognitive psychology and psycholinguistics (see section 3.221 below). Research in this area is concerned with the investigation of how a fluent reader reads.

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[2]ESL stands for English as a second language.

[3]L2 stands for a second language.

[4]EFL stands for English as a foreign language.

[5]EST stands for English for science and technology. EST is considered as a branch of ESP - English for specific purposes. EAP, English for academic purposes is also sometimes claimed to be a branch of ESP (Hutchinson and Waters 1987).

One of the dominant themes in this area is the definition of the nature, development and role of *schema* in reading - a theoretical metaphor for the reader's prior knowledge (Grabe 1991). Researchers in cognitive psychology and psycholinguistics question the explanatory usefulness of both the top-down inferential (Goodman's model) and schema-driven explanations of reading ability. As Grabe (1991:384) indicates,

> aside from the fact that we know we can call up prior knowledge from long-term memory, and that information seems to be integrated in efficient ways, it is difficult to know exactly how this prior knowledge is called up and used. The notion that our long-term memory is organized by *stable* schema structures does not appear to be strongly supported by current research.

Subsequently, interactive approaches to reading have taken a strong bottom-up approach, without denying the fact that prior knowledge is essential for reading. Current interactive approaches to reading, thus, assume that bottom-up processing contributes significantly to fluent reading. This argument is based on eye movement studies, research on word recognition and lexical access (see section 3.221 below). Studies on eye movements indicate that "some 80 per cent of content words and 40 per cent of function words are directly focused on in reading" (Grabe 1991:385). In fact the studies indicate that as readers

> we typically do not guess or sample texts, nor is reading an approximate skill. Rather, reading is a very precise and very rapid skill. ...The reason readers are so fast is not because they guess well but because they can identify the vast majority of the words automatically (Grabe 1991:385).

Research in second language reading, however, is concerned with those reading problems that are not usually considered in first language reading research. In general terms, according to Grabe (1991), these include second language acquisition and training background differences, language processing differences, and social context differences. The first category refers to the fact that second language readers begin reading in the target language with limited knowledge of the language. The second category refers to transfer effects from language processing differences that could cause reading problems, such as vocabulary cognates or orthography. The third category refers to the level of literacy skills second language readers have in their first language. Apparently, studies

in L1 reading cannot be directly applied to L2 reading because of these differences.

In an exploratory study for a possible approach to instruction in reading in English for academic purposes in Addis Ababa University, it is felt that it might be necessary to acknowledge the availability of some alternative explanations of the reading process while highlighting the preferred construct informing this research. Thus, a review of the major reading models and the current trends of reading research - the bottom-up data driven (the decoding model), the top-down concept driven (psycholinguistic model) and the interactive schema theoretic views of reading, with an emphasis on learning to read in a foreign language (in particular) or the role and development of background knowledge - is provided in an effort to indicate the connections between reader contributions, text nature and reader-text interaction in the process of reading. It is claimed that the first year social science students in Addis Ababa University have not had adequate English language learning experience in schools, and as a result, they have not been able to develop their background knowledge (section 2.6 Chapter 2). This could be the reason why most students are poor readers in English.

It is also noted that effective reader-text interaction entails the active participation of the reader to develop both his/her schematic and systemic knowledge or background knowledge. Thus, in order to realize this, a possible approach to develop the learner's abilities to read his/her academic course books in English - the individualised approach to learning to read in a foreign language - is qualified in the second half of this chapter.

3.21 Models of the reading process

3.211 Bottom-up models

It has been pointed out above that bottom-up data driven models of reading are based on the assumption that the learner attends to perceptions, organizes them and then summarises meaning from them (Clark 1987:59; Carrell 1988a). Samuels and Kamil (1988:31) state that "bottom-up models start with the printed stimuli and work their way up to the higher level stages." However, it has been argued that these serialist models

"fail to account for a variety of context effects (Rumelhart 1977) and could not explain the situation "whereby higher level processes can affect lower levels" (Stanovich 1980:34) and they were found to be inadequate, according to Eskey (1973), as reading theories since they disregarded readers' contributions and failed to see that readers utilize their expectations about the text based on their knowledge of the language and how it operates. Smith (1982:233-4) contends that "the spelling-to-sound correspondences cannot possibly be the basis of reading or learning to read because they do not transplant print into comprehensible speech." On the contrary, he argues, "it is the predictions of readers, the intentions of writers and the conventions of texts ... (that) make communication through written language and the experience of reading possible" (180).

It has been pointed out above that the structuralist-behaviourist school stressed oral language skills and these were assumed to be developed through intensive drilling (Fries 1945; Lado 1964; Rivers 1968) and the decoding of sound-symbol relationship was taken as pivotal to improve pronunciation and reading proficiency. In Ethiopia, in the 1970s, this approach was recommended not only as a solution for reading problems in English in schools, but also for all linguistic problems (Madsen 1976). In such a system, aspects of meaning and readers' contributions to the reading process were not considered as important.

3.212 Top-down models

Antithetically, as it has been pointed out above, Goodman (1976:498) contends that reading is an active process whereby the reader makes guesses using his/her background knowledge and confirms these by employing as few clues as possible from the print. Goodman states that reading is simply a psycholinguistic game which entails the

> partial use of available minimal language cues selected from perceptual input on the basis of the reader's expectation. As this partial information is processed, tentative decisions are made to be confirmed, rejected, or refined as reading progresses. ...It involves an interaction between thought and language. Efficient reading does not result from precise perception and identification of all elements, but from skill in selecting the fewest, most productive cues necessary to produce guesses which are right the first time. The ability to anticipate that which has not

been seen, of course, is vital in reading.

The above exposition about the reading process in which the text is sampled and predictions are made on the basis of the reader's prior syntactic and semantic knowledge has been styled as a top down concept driven model (Anderson 1978; Rumelhart 1977; Samuels and Kamil 1988). By emphasizing the role of background knowledge in the process of reading, Goodman (1976) argues that automatic processing ability in reading is the result of the sum total of the reader's experience and his/her language and thought development. In other words, "what appears to be intuitive in any guessing is actually the result of knowledge so well learned that the process of its application requires little conscious effort. Most language use has reached this automatic intuitive level" (501).

It is argued that the reader reconstructs meaning from the text by employing the different systems of the language (graphophonic, syntactic and semantic), "but he or she merely uses cues from these three levels of language to predict meaning, and, most important, confirms those predictions by relating them" (Carrell 1988a:3) to background knowledge that consists of past experiences and linguistic knowledge. Background knowledge embodies "knowledge of the world, of the content being read, of the context involved, of semantics, syntax, morphology, or even of phonetics or orthography" (Brown 1986:1).

Smith (1982:166) asserts that "the twin foundations of reading are to be able to ask specific questions (make predictions)...and to know how and where to look at print so that there is at least a chance of getting these predictions answered." He expounds the concept of prediction as "the elimination of unlikely alternatives on the basis of prior knowledge" (1977:388). van Dijk and Kintsch (1983:25), however, feel that such pure top-down processing is "psychologically absurd" and argue that this activity can only be labelled as "thinking" and not "reading". However, Samuels and Kamil (1988:24) claim that Smith's greatest contribution is his explanation of how redundancy inherent in all the systems of a language (letter features, within letters, within words, within sentences, within discourses) can aid the reader "with enormous flexibility in marshalling resources to create a meaning for the text at hand." Some researchers argue that the automaticity observed in good readers is not because they make accurate guesses but because they have the

ability to exploit the redundancy in language (van Dijk and Kintsch 1983).

In a nut-shell, "top-down conceptually driven processing (or reading) enables us to obtain a rapid expectation of what is likely to occur on the basis of previous experience, and to match this against the incoming sensory data (or text)" (Clark 1987:59). For Smith (1982:8), learning to read and reading to learn are the same. He says that "there are no special kinds of skills that beginners must learn and exercise that are not involved in fluent reading, nor is there any part of fluent reading that is not a part of learning to read. ... Everyone must read in order to learn to read, and every time we read we learn more about reading." However, as indicated above, top-down models have been criticised on some grounds based on empirical findings (Garner 1987). It is argued that they do not describe skilled reading behaviour accurately (Samuels and Kamil 1988:32) and the idea of generating an infinite set of predictions, without any purpose and context constraints, does not seem plausible and does not characterize effective reading (Mitchell 1982). Weber (1984), Rumelhart (1977), Stanovich (1980), Ulijin (1980), Perfetti (1985), and Waltz and Pollack (1985) contend these models do not accommodate important empirical evidence. Garner (1987) argues that these models are not supported by empirical data. For instance, it is argued that the speed for making hypothesis and generating a series of predictions should be greater than the speed for bottom up word identification in order for these models to be accepted as empirically convincing. However, it has been found that this is not the case in fluent reading. The models are also criticised for vagueness of conceptualisation (Garner 1987; Mitchell 1982). Their concept of prediction does not seem to explain the automaticity in recognizing lower textual constraints which is a characteristic of fluent readers (van Dijk and Kintsch 1983; Mitchell 1982; section 3.221 below).

3.213 Interactive schema-theoretic models

It has been pointed out that "bottom-up models start with the printed stimuli and work their way up to the higher-level stages, whereas the top-down models start with hypotheses and predictions and attempt to verify them by working down to printed stimuli" (Samuels and Kamil 1988:31; Carrell and Eisterhold 1988). It is argued that

while the former assume reading as a passive activity, in the sense that reader contributions are disregarded and the ability to read would somehow develop when one masters the hierarchically-ordered textual constraints, the latter emphasise that reading is an active process whereby the reader is engaged in making predictions and confirming these by employing as little visual input as possible from the text. However, the emphasis in both models has fundamentally remained linguistic knowledge of the reader (Williams and Moran 1989). The former disregards readers' contributions and the significance of background knowledge in processing a given text (presumably meaning is assumed to be in the text and the reader's role is to extract this), and the latter overemphasizes readers' contributions - equating reading with learning and hypothesis testing or confirming predictions - and pays little attention to textual constraints which seem to be the problems of ESL/EFL readers. It might be stated that top-down models are about fluent L1 reading. If so, researchers in favour of these models do not provide an explanation of L2 reading. As Allen (1986:15-16) observes, in most ESL/EFL classes "all too often reading becomes a mechanical, word-by-word translation exercise rather than a dynamic information sorting and synthesizing."

The relevance of prior knowledge or background knowledge to reading as information processing activity has led to research on how this prior knowledge is developed, stored and retrieved during reading (Rumelhart and Ortony 1977; Rumelhart 1980; Anderson and Pearson 1988). The various investigations on background knowledge or 'schema' indicate that the greater the background knowledge a reader has of a text's content area, the better he/she will understand that text (Carrell 1988b). Bransford and Johnson (1973:434) have confirmed that "the relevance of an utterance, or any visual message, is determined by our discovery of a relevant context in our conceptual knowledge about the world." This may imply that the reading problems of some students in the Addis Ababa University may be attributed to the lack of or the inability to invoke appropriate background knowledge or 'schema'. Rumelhart (1980:34) states that all knowledge, according to schema theories, "is packaged into units. These units are the schemata. Embedded in these packets of knowledge is, in addition to the knowledge itself, information about how this knowledge is to be used". In the process of learning, it is these packets of knowledge that are modified, changed or extended to accommodate for the new acquired knowledge.

Williams and Moran (1989:218) state that early studies on schema theory related to L1 reading confirmed that background knowledge and reader experience were essential for interpreting ambiguous passages (see also Anderson, Reynolds, Schallert and Goetz 1977). Freebody and Anderson (1983) found that background knowledge was more important than vocabulary difficulty in comprehending texts. Moreover, activating schemata before reading enhanced students' comprehension and recall (Wilson and Anderson 1986). However, Steffenson and Joag-Dev (1984) point out that although culture related schema is essential in reading, an inappropriate schema could be invoked (due to cultural differences) to cause some errors.

It has been pointed out that the psycholinguistic approach to reading assumes that "learning is the modification or elaboration of what is already known of cognitive structure, the theory of the world in the head" (Smith 1982:98). Learning is said to occur "when any of the three components of this theory - the category system, the rules for relating objects or events to categories (sets of distinctive features), or the complex network of interrelations among categories" is modified. It has also been pointed out that there is no difference between the processes of learning and reading (Smith 1982). On the other hand, learning or the modification of background knowledge, according to schema theorists, is assumed to involve both the formation of a new schema, and the modification of an already existing one (Rumelhart 1980).

Background knowledge is stored in memory in some form of abstract structure. This abstract structure is the schema. A schema abstracts or summarizes all various experiences and awareness of a variety of things and arranges or structures them in ways they are related to each other (Anderson and Pearson 1988:42). Similarly, Widdowson (1983:34-35) states that schemata can be taken as "cognitive constructs which allow for the organization of information in long-term memory and which provide a basis for prediction. They are kinds of stereotypic images which we map on to actuality in order to make sense of it, and to provide it with a coherent pattern." They are tools for the interpretation of reality.

Despite the fact that the schema theory is criticised as inadequate framework for the

mental representation of prior knowledge, its implications have been found useful for improving reading instruction in ESL contexts. Carrell (1988b) states that background knowledge in reading consists of formal and content schemata. Formal schemata (or systemic knowledge) are considered to include background knowledge of the formal, rhetorical organizational structures of different texts. In other words, they represent all abstract knowledge structure of the differences among rhetorical organizations such as differences in genre, in the structure of fables, simple stories, scientific texts, newspaper articles and the like. Content schemata (or schematic knowledge) represent all the background knowledge of the content of a given text. While the former focus on the background knowledge of textual constraints, the latter stress the background knowledge of the content of the text. This definition is from the reader's perspective, that is, a reader's schemata embody all the background knowledge of textual factors (or mainly linguistic constraints and their inter-relationships) and content factors (related to the text - socio-cultural, or academic disciplines, and the like and their connections) and their relationships (Carrell and Eisterhold 1988). The emphasis on ESL reading schema research, however, has been dominated by the separate study of the above factors as independent elements.

According to schema theorists, the comprehension or learning of a text is related to one's ability to "find a mental home for the information in the text" or to be able to "modify an existing mental home in order to accommodate that new information" (Anderson and Pearson 1988:37). Similarly, Widdowson (1983:37) qualifies "a mental home" or schema as a "stereotypic pattern derived from instances of past experience which organizes language in preparation for use." It is a *frame of reference* (in relation to the propositional content of discourse or to what is being said), and a *rhetorical routine* (in relation to the illocutionary activity of discourse or to what is being done). He states that in most cases the "collocation of particular lexical items" will be associated with the "frame of reference" and if this is invoked, it will "generate expectations about what is to come". This expectation, thus, is tied to the expectation that arises from the identification of a particular rhetorical routine manifest in texts.

It is argued that the reading process, according to the interactive schema theoretic view,

is the interaction of schematic and systemic knowledge of the reader. The former is what has already been referred to as content schemata and the latter as formal schemata or linguistic schemata in a broad sense. It is hypothesized that

> the act of reading does not involve so much the accumulation of new knowledge as the *confirmation* of predictions based on what is already known. We bring to reading, as we do to all experience of language use, what Frank Smith calls 'the theory of the world in the head' ... and this theory leads us to set up hypotheses, or in my terms schematic projections, to be tested as further information comes in from the discourse process (Widdowson 1983:61).

Thus, it is this 'theory of the world in the head', or schema (or the abstract structure), when appropriately invoked by incoming stimuli from print - a word, a phrase or a sentence, for example - that helps the reader to comprehend the intent or message of the writer, as stipulated above. In other words, as Widdowson (1979, 1990) argues, the writer is engaged in some kind of vicarious interaction with an imagined reader. He/she takes certain assumptions as known by the imagined reader and bases his/her points on these assumptions. These assumptions are related to textual and content constraints. The reader, on the other hand, is supposed to play his/her part in the negotiative act, which is sometimes referred to as the process of the negotiation of meaning, initiated by the writer. "If the reader has more knowledge than the writer has supposed, then he will tend to disregard the discourse that has been plotted in the act of writing and simply takes from the text whatever best suits his purpose. If the reader knows less ... than supposed, he will have to draw on systemic knowledge. ... If this strategy fails, then the meanings remain inaccessible, the text non-negotiable" (1990:108), and it can be assumed that there is a failure in communication. This may be given as a possible explanation for the inability of students considered in the baseline study to process the given reading texts (section 2.6 Chapter 2; ***Appendix 1.2***). It has been pointed out (section 2.6 Chapter 2 above) that some of the students considered for the baseline study seem not to be able to process the texts given to them probably because they know less than supposed by the writers of the respective texts. It might be doubtful to assert that their deficiency can only be attributed to linguistic problems.

Admittedly, this exploratory exposition is a simplified (when one realizes how complex

the reading process is) and an exclusive (since it does not include the host of variables simultaneously operating in the act of reading) representation of the reading process. However, it highlights two fundamental points: the relevance of background knowledge (both linguistic and content knowledge) for processing information in the medium of writing, and the interaction between the elements of this background knowledge. Current research has indicated that inability to activate appropriate schemata is a major source of difficulty in second language reading (Carrell 1988b).

The interactive approaches to reading - accommodating both bottom-up and top-down assumptions of the reading process, but not with equal emphasis to each approach (see for example, Perfetti 1985, 1990; Rayner and Pollatsek 1989, and Stanovich 1990, for strong bottom-up views but still accepting that reading is an interactive process) - centre on the interaction between the reader and the text, as indicated above (Barnett 1989; Carrell and Eisterhold 1988) on the one hand, and the interaction of various component cognitive skills to effect fluent reading comprehension, on the other. Most researchers now claim that the interactive approach takes reading as an interactive process involving both an array of lower-level rapid, automatic identification skills and a higher-level comprehension or interpretation skills (Eskey 1986; Eskey and Grabe 1988; Samuels and Kamil 1988).

The notion "interaction" (a term easy to use but difficult to pin down to empirical investigation) has become a buzz word in the two major trends in current reading research. Most cognitive psychologists and psycholinguists are interested in the area of defining the relationship and interaction between the various cognitive skills, such as automaticity in recognition of textual features, of L1 fluent readers. Some hold the stipulations of the schema models of reading with scepticism and the trend in this area has been to encourage research output which is explicit and testable (section 3.2 above). On the other hand, most second language researchers have emphasized the study of the process of interaction between the reader and the text by investigating both reader-textual factors, as indicated below (Grabe 1991).

3.22 Approaches to the study of the reading process

3.221 The component skills of reading

It has been pointed out above that cognitive psychologists and educational psychologists prefer to investigate the reading process - incidentally, the learning process - by exploring its component skills. Grabe (1991) summarizes these skills into six component parts that have more or less determined the paths of inquiry into the reading process in this area: automatic recognition and identification skills, vocabulary and structural knowledge, formal discourse structure, content or world background knowledge, synthesis and evaluation skills or strategies, and metacognitive knowledge and skills monitoring.

A major preoccupation of reading theorists is the exploration of automaticity in fluent reading. The automatic perceptual or identification skills refer to those that a fluent reader employs unaware of the process, not consciously controlling the process, and using little processing capacity (Adams 1990; Just and Carpenter 1987; Stanovich 1990), especially to identify features, letters or words. The major area of concern in studies in automaticity is at the feature, letter or word levels which demonstrate a fluent L1 reader's lexical access skills. Grabe (1991:380) relates that many researchers in the area are now convinced that "automatic lexical access is a necessary skill for fluent readers, and many less-skilled readers lack automaticity in lower level processing." It is believed that the lexical element of fluent readers becomes "encapsulated, that is, the process of lexical access during reading does not make use of contextual resources."(1991:380; also Stanovich 1990). By comparing the reading styles of poor and good readers, van Dijk and Kintsch (1983:23-24) argue that

> the greatest facilitation of word recognition by meaningful context is observed with poor readers, not with good readers. Furthermore, it is simply not true that good readers take decoding lightly; they fixate almost every content word. ...It has been found ... that the best discriminator between good and poor readers is performance on simple letter and word identification tasks. What is really wrong with poor readers is that they recognize isolated words inaccurately and too slowly, and compensate for their lack in decoding skills with context-dependent guessing or hypothesis testing. ...Good readers with their superior decoding skills can decode letters and words rapidly in a bottom-up fashion, and therefore do not

> normally need to resort to guessing strategies. ...What is really at issue are the speed and accuracy of context-free word recognition operations.

These findings and their implications may force one to question the basic assumptions of both the top-down concept driven models and the schema theories. It seems that fluency in reading is not necessarily the outcome of the reader's adeptness in generating hypotheses and confirming them. van Dijk and Kintsch argue that automaticity in word recognition plays a significant role in fluent reading.

The second area of exploration is the role of vocabulary and syntactic knowledge in fluent reading. Berman (1984), Devine (1988), Eskey (1988), Swaffar, and others (1991) assert the importance of structural knowledge in second language reading comprehension. Moreover, Anderson and Freebody (1981), Chall (1987), Nation (1990) and Swaffar (1988) stress vocabulary knowledge as important in second language reading.

The third field of inquiry is the role of the knowledge of formal discourse structure (formal schemata) in fluent reading. It has been established by various researchers that knowledge of the organization of a given text aids reading comprehension. Good readers exploit a given text organization and tend to employ this better than poor readers to write recalls, and they can do this only from certain types of text organization. Carrell (1984) has noted that specific logical patterns of text organization (such as cause-effect, compare-contrast, and problem-solution) help readers to recall better than texts which are loosely organized around a collection of facts.

The fourth area of study is concerned with the role of content and background knowledge (content schemata). The research supporting the fact that prior knowledge of text-related information as affecting reading comprehension is quite extensive (Anderson and Pearson 1984; Kintsch and van Dijk 1978; Wilson and Anderson 1986; Alderson and Urquhart 1988, to mention a few). Similarly, Carrell (1984b), Pritchard (1990), Steffensen and Joag-Dev (1984) studied the influence of cultural knowledge on reading. Carrell (1987) has also studied the influence of formal and content knowledge on reading comprehension.

The fifth area of concern mentioned by Grabe is the readers' ability to employ synthesis and evaluation skills and strategies to evaluate text information and compare or synthesize it with other sources of information or knowledge. It has been pointed out above that this skill of reading does not seem to be dependent on one's ability to predict. "Given the real time constraints of the reading process, fluent readers typically do not use prediction to decide upcoming words in texts or to access words; rather prediction helps readers anticipate later text information presented" (Grabe 1991:381). Thus, this will allow readers to decide whether the information contained in the text is relevant and to agree or disagree with the writer's point of view.

The last area of study in the component skills of reading is what is popularly termed as the metacognitive knowledge of reading. This refers to the knowledge about cognition and the self-regulation of cognition (Flavell 1979; Baker and Brown 1984; Brown, Armbruster and Baker 1986; Garner 1987). Knowledge about cognition involves recognizing patterns of structure and organization and using appropriate strategies to achieve specific goals, such as comprehending texts or remembering information.

Metacognitive knowledge of reading would involve, among other things, recognizing the more important information in the text; adjusting reading rate; using context to sort out a misunderstood segment; skimming portions of the text; previewing headings, pictures, and summaries; using search strategies for finding specific information; formulating questions about the information; using a dictionary; using word formation and affix information to guess word meanings; taking notes; underlining; summarizing information; and so on. Monitoring or employing of cognition includes recognizing problems with information presented in texts or an inability to achieve expected goals (for example, recognizing an illogical summary or awareness of non-comprehension). Self regulation strategies would include planning ahead, testing self-comprehension, checking effectiveness of strategies being used, revising strategies being used, and so on (see Table 4.3, Chapter 4, for the metacognitive questionnaire, or the set of reading strategies, employed in the current study; Hosenfeld 1977; Rubin 1987; Chamot 1987; O'Malley 1987). Barnett (1989), and Cohen (1990) have set lists of reading strategies which combine cognitive strategy use and monitoring.

Research on this area confirms that good readers employ metacognitive skills more effectively than poor readers. Hosenfeld (1984) has found out that successful readers seem to keep the meaning of the passage in mind, read in broad phrases, skip unessential words, guess from context the meaning of words; on the other hand, unsuccessful readers tend to lose the meaning of sentences as soon as they decode them, read word-by-word or in short phrases, rarely skip words, turn to the glossary for the meaning of new words. Similarly, successful readers seem to choose a reading approach appropriate to a given text and their purpose in reading it; they summarize as they go along; they read for general meaning , and they tolerate ambiguity in their reading until they can clarify the meaning (Rubin 1981). Recent research on second language reading instruction has focused on the effectiveness of strategy training for improved reading comprehension (see for instance, Wenden and Rubin 1987; Barnett 1989; Cohen 1990; Carrell, Pharis and Liberto 1989; Swaffar and others 1991).

3.222 Studies on reader-text interaction

Second language researchers have studied the reading process by probing into what they consider as the decisive element in the process of reading, the reader-text interaction. It is admitted that the emphasis of one component of the reading process at the expense of another may not accurately illuminate what is going on in the process, however, for the sake of analysis, the process has been "frozen", such as in forms of models or constructs, to allow investigation. Alderson and Urquhart (1984), and Williams and Moran (1989) take the following arbitrary categories of the process to help them discuss the pertinent research questions and findings: the text, the reader and the interaction between the reader and the text. It is to be noted that these aspects of the reading process have been discussed above in relation to the relevance of the reader's background knowledge to effective reading. Each model of reading ascribes particular attributes to each aspect. For instance, the decoding model takes the text as containing the writer's entire meaning and the task of the reader is to extract this. According to the psycholinguistic model it is the reader's background knowledge or 'the theory of the world in the head' that is the most important and the text facilitates the ability to confirm predictions and make further hypotheses.

3.2221 The text

Candlin (1984) and Widdowson (1983, 1984) argue that the text (as a collection of features, letters or words) does not contain meaning. Meaning is not in the text. Although text embodies a "residual quantum of meaning," it is the readers, with their meaning-generating capacities and helped by the clues in the text that invoke their schemata, who expand and develop this potential (Widdowson 1990). However, these readers' capacities, depending on both linguistic and extra-linguistic experience (or background knowledge), reading purposes and the affective involvement of the readers, make the reading process more complex and render textual descriptions, however elaborate, inadequate to explain readers' comprehension difficulties. Moreover, the meanings generated from texts may vary from reader to reader. As Candlin (1984:x) states, "texts do not have unitary meanings potentially accessible to all; they rather allow for variety in interpretation by different readers, governed by factors such as purpose, background knowledge, and the relationship established between the reader and the writer."

It is also contended that text accessibility and reading comprehension are related to each other. Anderson (1971:180) confirms this assumption by stating that "the readability or reading difficulty of a passage and a reader's comprehension of a passage ... are two ways of looking at the same event. If there is close correspondence between the decoder's and the encoder's system of 'language habits', then the passage or message is easy to comprehend. If there is not, comprehension is difficult." Widdowson (1990) on the other hand, emphasizes that encoder-decoder correspondence should be envisaged not only on systemic constraints (if that is what Anderson wants to imply when he mentions 'language habits') but also on schematic (all the various assumptions embedded in a text) aspects as well.

The above views about text-reader relationships have superseded those held in the 1950s and the 1960s. Behaviouristic views took reading as a means of facilitating language practice through the use of simplified texts and graded readers, as mentioned above (Williams and Moran 1989; section 2.3, Chapter 2 above, for a list of such readers used

in Ethiopian schools in the 1950s and 1960s, graded on lexical and syntactic aspects). Apparently, the major concern was on the linguistic accessibility of texts to imagined readers, mostly school children, and various types of readability formulae were developed to tap this difficulty considered to be mainly caused by word length and frequency, and sentence length and complexity. These readability formulae were used extensively in all areas, especially, in schools, courts, hospitals and the like in the United States of America (Klare 1969).

To relate this to the current concern, research studies (see section 2.6, Chapter 2 above) have indicated that social science first year students find their academic course books too difficult to read. Some researchers have used readability formulae, including the cloze procedure, to determine the level of difficulty of the course books and claim to have identified the gap between the readability of the course books and the reading ability of the students. It might not be wrong to assume that students find their course books difficult to read with a reasonably high degree of comprehension and involvement. What may be a bit hard to accept would be first, whether or not the tools they employed can be justified to indicate what they claim, or if not, what they actually measure.

The readability index of a text is established by taking word and sentence constraints into consideration. In other words,

> word difficulty may relate to infrequency of occurrence, and has been indexed either by reference to frequency lists, or by reference to word length, usually measured in number of syllables, since, on the whole, longer words tend to be less frequent and therefore might be expected to cause processing problems. Sentence complexity can be measured by a variety of devices, ranging from the number of transformations required to produce the surface string from a posited deep structure ... to a simple count of the number of words in a sentence, since, again on the whole, the longer the sentence, the more complex it is likely to be, with embedded and subordinate clauses and the like...(Alderson and Urquhart 1984:xxii).

By stating the practical definition of readability as "elements of writing (text) that are related to readers' success: content, style, format and organization" (1969:6-7), Klare argues that though readability has come to be used to indicate the *legibility* of either

handwriting or typography, *ease of reading* due to either the interest-value or the pleasantness of writing, and *ease of understanding* or comprehension due to the style of writing, it has mainly emphasized the last one which is usually assessed by subjective measures (such as asking readers their opinions about the level of difficulty of a text they have been given to read, taking teachers' and experts' opinion regarding the difficulty level of a given text, or even administering multiple choice questions to establish level of comprehension to aid in the decision for readability) and a set of readability formulae. But, Klare contends that skill factors, set to learn and the principle of least effort (as indicated in Figure 3.1, below) are not a direct function of textual factors, and thus they cannot be included in a readability formula - this being as the basic discrepancy of readability formulae.

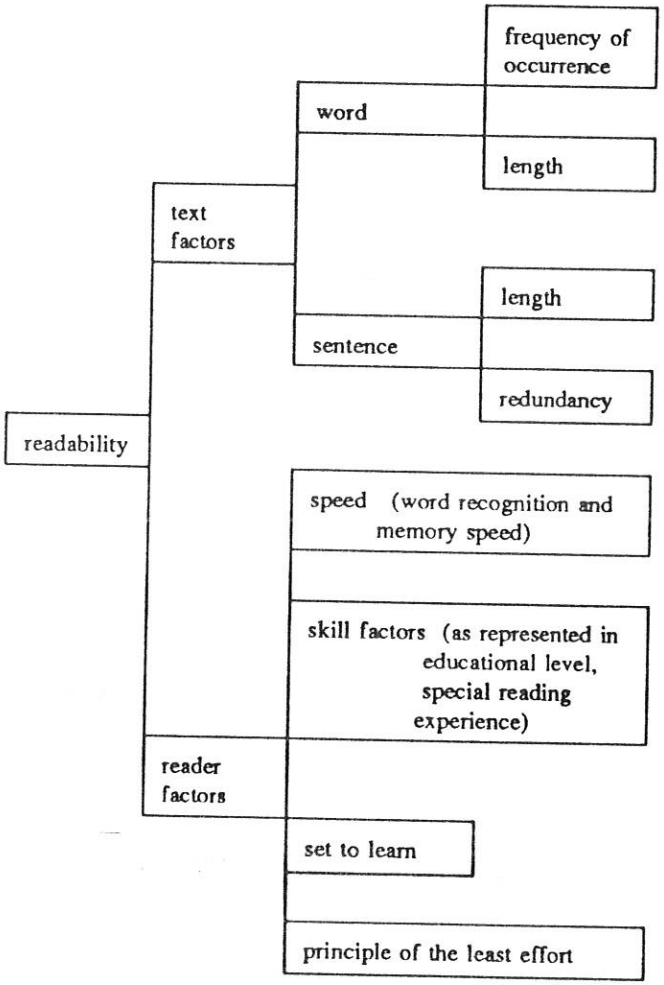

Figure 3.1 Summary of readability constraints (adapted from Klare 1969:6-7)

Dale and Chall (cited in Gilliland 1972) stipulate that "readability is the sum total (including interactions) of all those elements within a given piece of printed material that affects the success which a group of readers have with it." They state that success is to be seen in terms of comprehension, speed and level of interest. Of course, it is highly debatable whether or not one could come up with a formula that measures all these factors. Another aspect of a readability formula is its reliability and validity. Harrison (1980) takes some factors to investigate the reliability of any given readability formula. These include *sampling* (that is, how consistently the formula does its job of predicting the difficulty level of a whole passage or book on the basis of a number of samples), *age level accuracy* (that is, how accurately it predicts the age level of the passage) and *analyst reliability* (that is, how accurately the teacher or researcher does the calculations). These traditional criteria could be taken as rough guidelines and not as scientifically proven parameters of validating a given readability formula.

However, the claims of most readability formulae could not be substantiated and it is found out that no formula consistently predicts a similar grade level to any other formula (Stokes 1978:21). Harrison 1980 has also indicated the limitations of the readability formulae he selected for study, and he recommends the use of appropriate formulae for various purposes and concludes that there is no single formula that can be used for all levels; he advises the user to be selective and provides the preferred list of formulae for selected levels. On a practical level, most of the readability formulae are easy to handle, but it is not clear what they really measure. If it is argued that meaning does not reside in the text but is the result of the reader's interaction with the given text (Widdowson 1984), it is unclear what these readability formulae (with their emphasis on textual factors, even that limited to few aspects of the text) measure.

Another point of contention is what these readability indices indicate or what could be done if a text was found to be difficult according to the prediction of the selected readability formula. It is argued that these indices cannot indicate causes of reading difficulty. In other words, if one applies a readability formula to a text, finds it difficult for a given group of readers, and then manipulates the text to shorten sentence length and remove or replace any long words, it may not necessarily follow that the cause of

difficulty has been removed: the text might actually have been made more difficult, although the readability index would indicate that it is an easy text (Alderson and Urquhart 1984: xxii; Grellet 1981; Davies 1984). By selecting short sentences with one or two-syllable common words, according to the indications of the readability formula employed, one might get a low readability index. However, the new text, thus created, may have lost its redundant elements, essential rhetorical devices, and some of the words may have become more difficult than the original ones. The task of simplifying a text in this manner is aimed at the simplification of usage and not use (Widdowson 1979; Davies 1984); the attempts to make the text syntactically less complex may distort the original meaning.

In conclusion, it might be remarked that readability formulae mostly detach a text from its readership and its context - thus denying it its potential for meaning. In other words, these formulae disregard reader variables - background knowledge and the heterogeneity of readers - in order to establish readability indices of texts. Thus, it might be very difficult to come up with conclusive results regarding the qualification of the gap between the social science first year students' reading ability and the readability levels of their course books (which may not be easy to specify which course books are used by university students since they are expected to refer to various sources indicated in most course reading lists supplied by respective instructors using the readability formulae; and the readability formulae are based on L1 readers' performance.

The other method employed to determine text difficulty is what is commonly called the cloze procedure. The cloze procedure (not a readability formula) is claimed to tap both reader and text constraints, or more explicitly, the correspondence between the grammatical and semantic 'habit systems' of encoders and decoders (Anderson 1971). First employed by Taylor to test reading comprehension, it was assumed that it was based on the concept of closure in gestalt psychology. However, since the gestalt explanations of closure are related to merely perceptual stimuli rather than to cognitive thought processes, many researchers associated the functioning mechanisms of the cloze with the concept of 'noise' in Weaver's model of communication theory. By way of justifying the cloze procedure, Anderson indicates the assumed theoretical roots by stating that

> according to the language communication model ... the transmission and receiving of a message are seen essentially as coding operations. The source or encoder, the writer or author, produces a message, a passage of printed English. Noise, which in the present context consists of mutilation of the language patterns of the message, interrupts the coded message before it is received, by the decoder or reader. To decode the message, cloze procedure requires the reader to construct the mutilated language patterns by making the most likely replacement in the light of his language system and the grammatical and semantic cues that are available (1971:179-180).

Moreover, it is claimed that the crucial aptitude in answering cloze tests is the ability to exploit linguistic redundancy (Anderson 1971; Harrison 1980; Smith 1982). In line with the psycholinguistic view of the reading process, Smith (1982:229) expounds the concept of redundancy as a major factor in cloze.

> One way of interpreting a high score for a particular space would be that there are very few alternative words that could be put in that position - the uncertainty is low. And the only reason that uncertainty is low in that position is that most of the alternative words have been eliminated by information acquired from other parts of the passage, from the words that have not been removed. Passages that get a relatively large number of missing words correctly replaced may therefore be regarded as more easily comprehensible than those whose spaces are more dubious; thus this type of score is sometimes interpreted as a measure of the "intelligibility" or "readability" of a passage.

Harrison (1980:102) claims that the cloze test is both reliable and valid and recommends a seventh-word deletion rather than a fifth-word deletion if the students are weak. He also prefers verbatim scoring and states that the cloze test indicates information gain in general knowledge, linguistic competence and general intelligence. On a fifth-word deletion, he suggests that the scores can be interpreted as 35 per cent to 40 per cent as *frustrational* (material too difficult for the learner), 40 per cent to 55 per cent as *instructional* (the learner can manage the reading with some teacher's help), and 55 per cent to 60 per cent as *independent* (the learner can handle the material on his/her own). These recommendations are made based on earlier research findings by Bormuth (1968). The cut-off points are corroborated by further research conducted in Fijian schools (Elley 1984). An alternative cut-off points based on the seventh-word deletion is 37 per cent and below as *frustrational*, 38 per cent to 50 per cent as *instructional* and 51 per cent and

above as *independent* (Cripwell 1976). The current study selected this for the analysis of the cloze test results (section 5.222 and section 5.322 Chapter 5) but it should be noted that these cut-off points are guidelines for assessing text accessibility.

Despite the strong claims made, cloze tests do not seem to answer the question what causes a text to be difficult. It has also been argued that the cloze procedure is limited as a tool for identifying text difficulty. It is claimed to be insensitive to aspects that range beyond the context immediately surrounding a deletion (Alderson 1979, 1980; Porter 1978, 1983; Shanahan and Kamil 1982, 1983, to mention a few). Alderson (1979, 1980) and Davies (1984) contend that the cloze procedure is variable and may be limited to assessing lower order linguistic ability.

On the other hand, some researchers feel that the cloze procedure is sensitive to inter-sentential constraints and can be effectively employed to test higher-order skills (Bachman 1982). Bachman (1982, 1985), Brown (1983), Chavez-Oller, and others (1985), Gamara and Jonz(1987), Jonz (1987, 1990), among others, argue that cloze is stable, reliable and sensitive to comprehension processes at various levels; some (Bachman 1985) recommend a rational deletion and not the conventional every n^{th} word deletion.

The argument whether or not to use readability formulae and/or the cloze procedure to establish text difficulty has not yet been settled as evidenced by the recent article by Jonz (1990) on the merits of the cloze procedure. However, other researchers have pursued other routes to define text difficulty without venturing to provide their readers with a formula or a tool for identifying text difficulty (section 3.221 above). Cooper (1984), Williams and Dallas (1984), and Wodinsky and Nation (1988) have studied vocabulary as an index of text difficulty, while Berman (1984) mentions structure, Urquhart (1984) examines text organisation as an aspect of text difficulty.

Despite the heated debate about the limitations of the readability formulae and the cloze procedure - that is, whether or not they precisely measure text difficulty and, even if they do, they do not indicate the cause of the difficulty - they are still used by some reading course writers to select and grade texts. For instance, the ***SRA*** reading packages and the

ELSIP seem to be produced by the use of a variety of readability formulae and the cloze procedure. The two types of reading sets will be discussed in some detail below, but it seems apt to include here briefly an investigation of the general assumptions used by some current course designers for reading in English for academic purposes.

After having undertaken a series of investigations on the reading abilities of their students, mostly based on discourse analysis, Selinker, Todd-Trimble and Trimble (cited in Jordan 1989:155-156; section 3.2 above) concluded that their students "often seem unable to comprehend the total meaning of the EST discourse even when they understand all of the words in each sentence and all of the sentences that make up the discourse." They suggest that students should be taught to see the rhetorical organizations in their reading texts, and teaching materials for reading in EST should provide ample exercises on rhetorical devices. Thus they felt that the rhetorical organizations of scientific texts in English contributed to their inaccessibility and recommended the teaching of these to students.

Text difficulty is presumably an area of interest for reading materials writers. Some may employ, such as the graded readers producers, indices of text difficulty to select and grade texts. Usually, lexical and syntactic factors are considered in the graded readers (Bamford 1984). Bloor (1985) surveys the design and the theoretical justifications for the design of some contemporary reading courses claiming to help EFL students improve their reading ability for academic purposes. Her analysis does not include the assumptions from the selection and grading of the reading texts. Fundamentally, all reading courses claim to help students develop the ability to read a variety of non-fiction texts for the purpose of gaining information (this *per se* is controversial; we may read not necessarily for gaining information, and there may not be a difference in developing the ability to read texts that are dense with information and those with less information; purpose and background knowledge of the reader, among other things, seem to override the whole process).

Bloor (1985:342) admits that in light of the speculations, opinions and claims made by reading materials writers, "it is often difficult to sort out the reasons for particular

activities let alone establish their validity." She identifies four categories based on the approaches these course books seemed to reflect. The first is what she types as the psychological approach. This includes all those courses that "claim to provide exercises or activities which train natural reading processes; they focus on what takes place in the mind of the individual reader" (page 342). The courses focus on two distinct levels - word recognition (the graphic-phonic relationship) and interpretation (the syntactic-semantic-pragmatic relationship in the text). Examples are provided from *Skills for Reading* (Morrow 1980), and *Reading and Thinking in English* (Moore and others 1979/80).

The second category includes those materials that implicitly or explicitly employ the linguistic approach which emphasizes the mastery of words and sentences of the selected reading text. "The assumption is that if the learners can handle linguistic features of the text efficiently, reading ability will be improved" (page 348; see also section 3.22 above). Extracts from *Reading and Comprehension Course* (Sim and Laufer-Dvorkin 1982) and the earlier books of *Reading and Thinking in English* (Moore and others 1979/80) are taken to demonstrate this. It is stated that in the latter, the exercises are not overtly grammatical though they have a range of language-related exercises.

The third category is what Bloor calls the content-orientated approach. This is based on the view that "the *purpose* inherent in a particular act of reading is an essential feature" (page 351). The task of the course designer is to help the learner to learn to define his or her purpose for reading. "Content-orientated reading exercises sometimes provide the purpose for the reader by specifying a reason for reading a particular passage before actual reading takes place. In other cases, it is assumed that reading passages on topics related to learners' specific needs will fulfil their real-world purposes, and thus stimulate their interest and involvement in reading" (page 351). These assumptions are demonstrated by drawing sample exercises from *Reading for a Purpose* (Bloor and Grant 1978), *Reasons for Reading* (Davies and Whitney 1979), *Study Skills in English* (Wallace 1980), and *English Studies* series (Mackin 1971). It might be argued that although the reader's purpose, among other factors, determines how and what he or she reads, it might be difficult to produce reading materials incorporating all possible purposes of readers -

even academic purposes may be difficult to pin down due to individual differences in all respects (Dickinson 1987; Clark 1987). Learning or reading purpose, as such, is appropriately defined by the individual who is learning to read.

Bloor refers to the last category as the pedagogically-orientated approach, that is "when learning theories are the prime motivation for the design of the total *course* rather than the design of individual exercises" (page 355). These are reading courses which involve reading boxes or sets of reading cards and they are mostly designed for reading at the learner's own individual rate of progress. She mentions *Reading Choices* (Jolly 1982), which are specifically prepared for self-access work. She relates (from the Teacher's Book of the *Reading Choices*) that "textual difficulty for any individual student depends on a number of factors, not simply on those of lexical frequency and grammatical complexity. The same text may appear difficult to one student and easier to another often for no reasons than differences in motivation, previous knowledge of the topic or text type. These factors transcend mere linguistic description" (page 355). Bloor summarizes the theoretical assumptions of this approach as follows:

> readers who are given some choice in the selection of their own reading materials and who can develop at their own rates will be more successful readers than those whose programme of studies is directed by the teacher, the course book or the administrator.
>
> [Moreover] the interests of the students are best served if control of the reading activity is left in their hands (rather than in those of the teacher) with respect to choice of topic, text type, textual function, apparent difficulty *and* amount of help required in understanding texts. On the question of difficulty, Jolly's approach differs from that of some earlier sets of reading cards in that the cards are not graded in level from the point of view of language complexity, although they do vary in length and text type.

One significant point Bloor mentions about Jolly's approach is that the collections are not graded on the basis of linguistic factors as the ***SRA*** or other graded readers like ***ELSIP***. She adds that the exercises are varied and content-orientated but they remain as facilitators of the reading activity. In other words, they are, in effect, "superfluous to the objectives of allowing students the time and opportunity to read in English" (page 355). Bloor concludes by stating "it is claimed that courses which permit individuals to assume

responsibility for their own work also help the learners to a position of independence of the teacher, which is ultimately essential for any reading course since reading has to be an individual activity" (page 356).

Both the *SRA* and *ELSIP* reading collections make similar claims. As pointed out below (section 4.2224 and section 4.335, Chapter 4), both allow students to make their own choices from the collections and read as fast and as far as their learning rate and capacity allow. The *SRA* collection, in particular, is based on the following assumptions of the reading process:

> Reading consists of many skills. The student must learn to connect sight and sound to produce the visual recognition of letters, letter combinations, words, groups of words, and sentences. He must learn how to derive meaning from sentences, then from paragraphs, then from whole stories, articles, or textbook lessons. He must be able to use a systematic approach to reading and study, such as the SQ3R formula used in the READING LABORATORY [sic]. He should also be able to enjoy reading for pure pleasure, using whatever method he chooses - or no method at all (1985 Teacher's Book, Introduction).

In other words, the endeavour to relate reading activity to education objectives is the characteristic claim of the collections, although it may be mentioned that the serialist, bottom-up approach assumed towards reading in particular and learning in general seems to be somewhat assertive. The approach recommended for reading development is SQ3R (survey-question-review-read-recite) for all types of learners. Royer, Bates and Konold (1984:79) appreciate the effectiveness of inserted questions in reading texts to enhance reading ability and, by citing Keller, indicate the characteristic features similar to the SRA used by the personalized system of individualised instruction. In general, the features include the following. Firstly, "the instructional material is organized and sequenced into smaller units, and students are required to 'demonstrate mastery' by performing at or above some minimum achievement level before proceeding to subsequent units." Secondly, the material consists of almost entirely written textual information. Thirdly, lectures or demonstrations are mainly designed to maintain student interest and motivation and not explicitly for instructional purposes. Lastly, "students are ideally allowed to proceed through instructional units at their own pace, going as fast or as slow as their abilities or special needs dictate."

Despite its limitations, the collection contains several texts selected from a variety of books and periodicals containing a wide range of subjects such as science, biography, adventure, humour, fiction, folklore, ecology, history, sports and the like featuring a wide

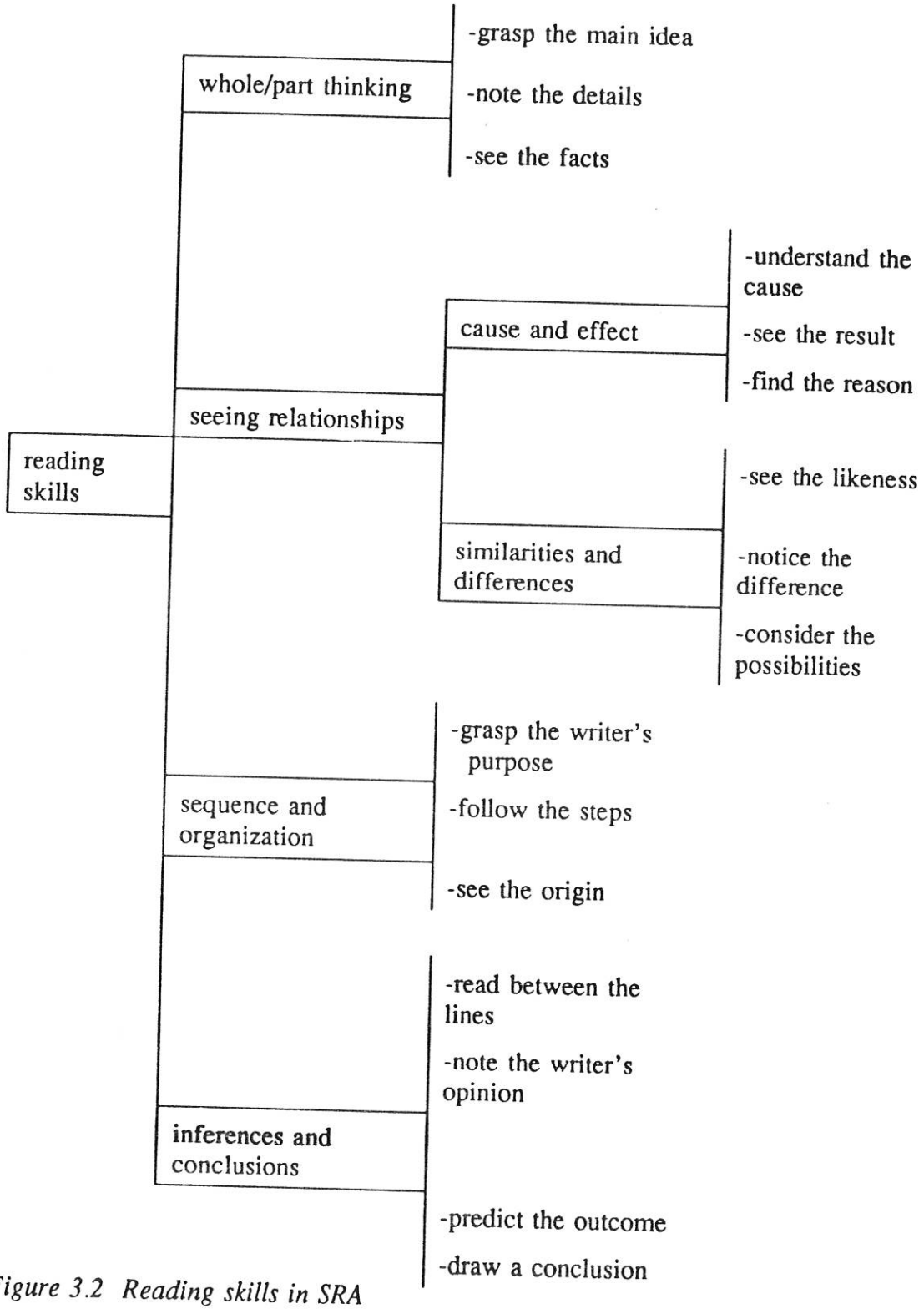

Figure 3.2 Reading skills in SRA

sampling of writing styles (page 9). Moreover, the authors claim that the "materials have been ranked on a continuum of difficulty from easy to hard according to the existing knowledge of the basic skills that make up the total skill of reading" (page 8). The authors, however, do not explicitly mention the criteria they have used to select and grade the materials. From the focus on vocabulary and structure development exercises, one may safely imagine that linguistic factors are decisive. The authors consider the reading process as consisting of subskills in a hierarchical manner as indicated in Figure 3.2 above.

The focus on developing the mentioned skills, which the authors recommend, has been taken by Baird and White (cited in Nisbet and Shucksmith 1986:71) as a discrepancy in the materials and they argue that "they do not ultimately give students the responsibility for their own learning - too many learners remain limited to following instructions and protocols" (see also comments given by students in the main study group, for instance, ***str 3.1258, Appendix 3.12***).

However, as Robb and Susser (1989:243) indicate, the materials are more goal-orientated and suitable for developing reading through extensive reading which, according to Nuttal (1982:65) "is the single most effective way of improving both vocabulary and reading skills in general." Davies and Widdowson (1974) and Fawcett (1977, 1979) also claim that the materials are suitable for developing reading. Fawcett, after administering the materials on native speakers of English, reports significant improvement in learners' reading comprehension and adds that the materials should be used as the authors have prescribed. He states that "the groups using the Reading laboratory material made highly significant gains over the control groups, at all age levels in speed and accuracy of reading, development of vocabulary and the ability to comprehend. These gains were made initially, on completion of the intensive experimental programme, and maintained or even improved over the next six months (1977: abstract). Boey (1976), Eskey (1973) and Lynn (1972), however, doubt the effectiveness of these materials in developing reading comprehension. Eskey and Grabe (1988:230-231) doubt the effectiveness of the reading lab approach, which the SRA and ELSIP promote, and argue that the approach "presupposes a substantial library of materials, and, since there are no texts that every

student reads, it limits the kinds of group work that can be done and tends to isolate reading from other parts of the curriculum - or other shared experience. For students who are not strong self-motivators -who, for example, have not developed the habit of reading in depth in their own languages - this may be a major problem." They suggest the organization of a content-centred approach - that provides a "critical mass" of information on a subject that help to read about it extensively and integrate all the macro-skills of language - listening, reading, speaking and writing.

The ***ELSIP*** (English Language Self Instruction Package materials), unlike the ***SRA***, do not contain exercises on developing any explicit reading skill, though a claim is made that as one reaches *Level Four* of the graded readers published by various UK publishing companies, such as Collins, Longman, Heinmann, he/she will have achieved an approximate equivalent to a score of 500 on the *TOEFL* test (***ELSIP*** student guide). The ***ELSIP*** is a collection of graded readers not particularly different from earlier series of graded readers, except that it contains, as indicated in Table 4.4, Chapter 4 below, a series of progress tests after each level. Thus it shares all the characteristics of most graded readers from which it incorporated a substantial number of reading books. Bamford (1984:218-219), after having surveyed most of the graded readers recommended for use in schools, states that

> these are short books of fiction and non-fiction which are graded structurally and lexically - and occasionally in other ways. At lower levels, the books are usually purpose-written original titles. At higher levels, they are usually abridged and adapted from existing books. The levels are graded from beginner to advanced, and at each level the books are written using only the grammatical structures and vocabulary items appropriate to that level of study. This grading ostensibly ensures that learners can read with relative fluency without being overwhelmed by unfamiliar structure and vocabulary.

In addition, Bamford states that graded readers try to resemble textbooks or books that young readers would like to read for pleasure. They are usually controlled in structure, sentence length and complexity, vocabulary and "(rarely) the flow of information and the explicitness of background concepts and suppositions" (page 219).

In summary, texts for reading are selected by using various criteria, including the readability formulae and the cloze procedure but more significantly using word lists, like the Dale-Chall or Michael West, and sentence complexity. As has been stated, there are problems in establishing the levels of difficulty of words and sentences, and the mere use of frequency and length for word difficulty and length for sentence difficulty often yields inconclusive results (Bamford 1984).

3.2222 The reader

One fundamental issue that readability formulae seem to fail to include in the assessment of text difficulty is the reader variable. It is alleged that they separate text from its context and readership. Similarly, the cloze procedure, it is alleged, is mainly limited to short passages.

However, a number of researchers who used the graded readers described above, claim reader successes (Hafiz and Tudor 1989, 1990; Elley and Mangubhai 1983; Robb and Susser 1989), despite the limitations of graded readers mentioned above. Elley and Mangubhai (1983:61), in particular, state that, by giving Fijian school children a large number of high-interest story books in English, and by conducting this experiment for over two years, they claim to have found that the children in the experimental group improved their "general reading comprehension skill at over twice the normal rate."

Similarly, Robb and Susser (1989) describe an experiment comparing the improvement of reading comprehension by Japanese college freshmen taught by either a skills-based or extensive reading procedure and they assert that their results suggest what they labelled as extensive reading procedure may be at least as effective as skills building with the additional advantage that the extensive reading procedure is more motivating. This casts the usual doubt as to whether it is the nature of the texts or the long-term effect of the learners' use of the materials or, more significantly, the predispositions of the readers that has brought about the claimed change. As Williams and Moran (1989:220; also implied in Bloor's, 1985, assessment of EFL reading materials, especially in her fourth category) state

> one of the effects of a more learner-centred pedagogy in EFL reading has been to focus less upon a text, and more upon the reader. Although this concern has been evident in the research literature, the evidence from published material suggests that it has proved difficult to incorporate all aspects of research findings into material for EFL learner readers.

Admittedly, what has proved to be more difficult than this is the research findings themselves are inconclusive and the claims made by some researchers cannot be substantiated. One type of approach pursued to explain the reading process (and whose findings are used to develop reading courses for EFL contexts, such as the types mentioned by Bloor, 1985, above, and the ***SRA***, as depicted above in Figure 3.2) is the skills approach to developing EFL reading.

The skills approach to reading is informed by research on the analysis of the subskills of reading. Typical taxonomies of reading skills include that of Barrett (1968), Davies and Widdowson (1974), Adams-Smith (1981), and possibly, Royer, Konold and Bates (1984). Brown and Hirst (1983:138-139) reject the idea that reading is a skill "comprising a number of discrete subskills, which can be differentiated and described and therefore perhaps taught and tested. Instead, they support Lunzer and Gardner (1979) by claiming that individual differences in reading comprehension "reflect only one general aptitude: this being the pupil's ability and willingness to reflect on whatever he is reading." Likewise, Alderson and Urquhart (1984) find the skills-approach to the analysis of reading raises far more and complicated questions than the answers it provides about the reading process. The claim that types the reading process as consisting of a series of discrete subskills is unsubstantiated by research. Lunzer and Gardner (1979) fail to establish the existence of separate subskills. "They could not find, for instance, readers who could make inferences and do lower tasks, but could not make judgements about what they were reading" (Alderson and Urquhart 1984:xvii).

Another point raised by Alderson and Urquhart is related to the way researchers establish the reading skills. They state that "the skills approach typically proceeds by giving subjects tests on their understanding of passages, yet doing a comprehension test and actually reading are probably not the same thing" (page xvii). Moreover, testing the

comprehension level of a learner may not be an appropriate indication of how the learner has achieved this level or has not achieved another. This is by no means an appropriate clue to help the teacher of reading to plan strategies to help his or her students to reach the next level (although this is the major assumption underlying the placement tests in SRA and the graded readers such as ELSIP). Alderson and Urquhart also argue that the levels established by administering reading comprehension tests are indicative of the *product* of reading, or the outcome of understanding, rather than the *process* of reading. They argue that

> a description of what the student has understood of a text is not the same as a description of how he arrives at such an understanding. The product of reading may vary in terms of levels of meaning and comprehension, but it does not follow that the levels of comprehension reflect different skills. It is at least possible that readers use similar *processes* for getting at different *products* (page xviii).

Another point of contention against the skills-approach to the study of the process of reading is that even the product of reading is affected by reader variables - such as background knowledge (Carrell 1988), cultural knowledge (Steffensen and Joag-Dev 1984), the ability to prompt appropriate background knowledge (Bransford, Stein and Shelton 1984), or subject or content background knowledge (Alderson and Urquhart 1988; Mohammed and Swales 1984). Apparently, these reader variables affect his or her product of reading and, possibly, the process of reading. Readers' purpose and motivation have the same, if not more, effect on the product or outcome of understanding. Royer, Bates and Konold (1984) confirm that a reader's purpose (not a teacher's or a material writer's purpose, though this may affect the outcome) affects his/her outcome of understanding. Fransson (1984) indicates, despite the experimenter's attempts to manipulate purpose (however, this is one of the guidelines used to develop EFL reading materials, as pointed out by Bloor, 1985), readers' motivation has an overriding effect on both the process and product of reading (Elley and Mangubhai 1983; Frankel 1982). This is also confirmed by Olshavsky (1977) and Elley (1984).

Lastly, Alderson and Urquhart argue that the skills-approach to the study of reading is based on the traditional assumption that "texts have predictable meanings, which can be

extracted if only the reader is sufficiently skilful" (page xix).

In conclusion, while not denying the relevance of *product* for various purposes, Alderson and Urquhart argue, the overemphasis on the *product* at the expense of the *process* may not give the true picture of the reading act. Research has concentrated more on *product* than on *process*. They state that emphasizing the aspect of process in reading has valuable pedagogical implications.

> the value of concentrating on process in research and teaching is that if *processes* can be characterized, they may contain elements that are general across different texts, that learners can learn in order to improve their reading. The basic rationale behind attempts to describe *process* is that an understanding should lead to the possibility of distinguishing the processing of successful and unsuccessful readers. This in turn should lead to the possibility of teaching the strategies, or process components, of successful readers to unsuccessful ones, or at least making the latter aware of the existence of other strategies, which they might wish to try for themselves (page xix).

Though one may concur with their statement that the process of reading is elusive and difficult to pin down to concrete realization, Alderson and Urquhart do not explicitly indicate, at least in the above work, that learning by itself is a process and the relationship between teaching and learning a controversial issue. It is argued that teaching and learning may not have cause and effect relationship (see 1.12 Chapter 1; Allwright 1984). Their suggestion seems not to include the aspect of individual differences. What works for one to be a successful reader may not be helpful for another (Dickinson 1987). It might also be argued that product, as an outcome of process, has some valid indicative value.

3.2223 Text-reader interaction

Alderson and Urquhart recommend the study of the process of reading rather than the product of reading, and this approach subsumes the analysis of the interaction between the reader and the text. The study of the interaction may yield some recurring *styles, skills* and *strategies* of reading of the target population. As Williams and Moran (1989) state,

recall, predict, evaluate, and identify main points from supporting details. Each test takes forty five minutes. The reading comprehension pretest and post test results are analyzed in section 5.221 Chapter 5 below.

4.2222 Readability tests

The major purpose of the readability tests (***Appendix 5***) is to find out the degree or level of difficulty students have in reading their first year course books. It has been pointed out in section 3.2221 Chapter 3 above that establishing a readability level of a text is quite subjective and prone to leave many questions unanswered rather than provide a convincing solution. There is no readability formula available to date that can effectively test whether a given text is difficult or not for a target population. Most readability formula are based on the common assumption that a text is likely to be difficult to read if it has many long sentences with a number of more than three-syllable words (section 3.2221 Chapter 3; Klare 1969; Gilliland 1972; Alderson and Urquhart 1984). Besides this, each readability formula has its own discrepancies (Harrison 1980).

It is indicated in section 3.2221 Chapter 3 that some researchers claim that the cloze procedure is effective in bringing together both reader and text characteristics (Bachman 1982; Jonz 1987). They claim that the procedure is sensitive and reliable to comprehension processes at various levels - low and high level skills in reading. As mentioned in section 3.2221 Chapter 3, other researchers argue the cloze procedure is only effective in measuring only the lower order reading core proficiency skills. They claim that the research findings confirm that the cloze procedure is erratic, unreliable and insensitive to textual aspects across sentences (Alderson 1979:219; 1980; Klein-Braley 1983; Markam 1985). Despite these conflicting views, the cloze procedure is used in this study because (a) it is assumed that it is better than most readability formula (Jonz 1990) and (b) some researchers claim that it is simple to set and mark (Cripwell 1976; Harrison 1980; Elley 1984).

Accordingly, three texts of 250 to 300 words length have been selected from the first, the middle and the last sections of each freshman course book: geography, history,

philosophy and political economy. Every seventh word is deleted and there are 25 deletions in each text. Actual deleted words are sought as correct responses in order to avoid any subjectivity in the marking[4]. By using Cripwell's (1976) cut-off points[5], the raw scores are interpreted as follows: a score of 37 per cent and below indicates that the text is very difficult, and thus its readability level is identified as *frustrational*; a score between 38 per cent to 50 per cent indicates that the text could be understood with some help from the teacher, and its readability level is labelled as *instructional*; and, a score of 51 per cent and above indicates that the text is easy enough to be handled by the student independently, and its readability level is indexed as *independent* level. When this is computed out of 25, 9 and below, 10 to 12, and 13 and above out of 25 can be taken to indicate the *frustrational*, *instructional* and *independent* levels of readability respectively for a particular course book.

4.2223 Tests of English language ability

The test papers of the first two service English courses (Freshman English 101A and Freshman English 101B) have been selected to evaluate students' linguistic ability in light of the official linguistic requirements (***Appendix 6***). These test papers are selected because they are conventionally taken as reflecting the official English language requirements of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature. Whether these tests succeed in assessing the students' linguistic ability to cope with the academic requirements or not, or whether they meet the general criteria of test validity and reliability, or the like, has been considered beyond the scope of this study. However, recent studies tentatively hold that there are some limitations in these tests (Teshome

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[4]However, it should be noted that those who claim that the cloze procedure is effective for measuring readability levels, do not agree on two basic issues: the basis of the deletion and the marking of the responses. While Bachman (1982, 1985) asserts rational deletion (deleting selected syntactic elements) as the most effective in assessing readability, Harrison (1980) recommends random deletion (whereby every n^{th} word, usually the fifth or the seventh, is deleted). Moreover, Harrison (1980) and Cripwell (1976) recommend original deleted words as correct or acceptable responses to avoid subjectivity.

[5]As indicated in section 3.2221 Chapter 3, Elley (1984) studied the correspondence between the cut-off points of scores of native and non-native speakers on a cloze test in order to justify the use of the cloze procedure for establishing readability levels. He claimed that there was a high relationship between the two cut-off points.

1992), such as the assumption that a great majority of the students can perform satisfactorily well as soon as they join the university after completing high school in, for instance, Freshman English 101A, before they take the course Freshman English 101A for a semester (section 5.323; Figure 5.9 Chapter 5). It is understood that both tests follow the same pattern: reading comprehension section, vocabulary section, structure and usage section, and composition section. All sections in each test do not receive the same weight. In general, more marks are allotted to the reading comprehension, and the structure and usage sections.

4.2224 Teaching materials for the pilot study

As stated above (section 1.2, section 1.5 Chapter 1; section 3.2221 Chapter 3) the selection of teaching materials is dependent on the theoretical assumptions that inform individualised reading. These materials should encourage learners' creativity and facilitate learning through discovery. They should allow the use of preferred learning styles and strategies while at the same time provide ample rich learning experience and maintain learners' motivation (Frankel 1982; Dickinson 1987; 1988; Bloor 1985). They should also be relevant to learners' purposes - in this case, they should enhance reading in English for academic purposes.

The ***English Language Self-Instruction Package*** or ***ELSIP*** (section 3.2221 Chapter 3) is selected for the pilot study group (section 4.213). The package consists of graded readers with tapes published by various *ELT*[6] publishers. It consists of 'talking books'

Initial placement test	**Level 1** 600 voc. 30 bks	**Level 2** 600-1200 30 bks	**Level 3** 1200-2000 30 bks +	**Level 4** 2000-2500 20 bks 20 readrs	**Level 5** 2500+ 10 taped novels
Progress Test	progress test 1-5	progress test 6-10	progress test 11-15	progress test 16-20	

Table 4.4 Components of the ELSIP (source: ***ELSIP*** Student Guide)

[6]ELT means English language teaching

(books with tapes), readers and taped novels in five levels of difficulty as indicated in Table 4.4 above.

The ***ELSIP*** Student Guide outlines the preliminary tasks of a student wishing to use the package. It advises students to *want to learn* English, develop the *purpose for learning* the language, determine their current linguistic ability, assess their rate of progress in their learning, programme their study, decide *what* and *how much* to study, and determine the time they could spend in studying. After taking the initial placement test (which is exclusively developed using the cloze procedure), students are supposed to choose the titles and descriptions given in the guide, select the one title they like best, read the book and listen to the tape at the same time, read the book without the tape (jotting down some vocabulary items), read the book and listen to the tape again, listen to the tape without the book, do the exercise or puzzle at the end of the book, and be ready to answer questions such as whether they liked the book they read, how much time they spent on reading the book and whether they followed the steps. Ultimately, students are advised to complete their entry on their progress chart (***ELSIP*** *Student Guide*).

These readers are believed to provide learners with the freedom to learn on their own on the one hand, and an adequate learning material which is both interesting and motivating, on the other (Elley 1986:222-5 for the results of book floods in the Fiji islands). However, due to the problem mentioned above (section 4.213), the materials have to be used without the tapes and some of the steps recommended in the ***ELSIP*** Student Guide have to be adapted to the prevailing situation.

4.23 Mode of the study of the pilot group

Before the classes started, the teachers involved have been given an orientation on how to manage the 'special' classes. The orientation has focused on teacher-student role, facilitating student independent work, methods of follow up of students in the individualised reading classes, maintaining and enhancing student motivation and confidence, and conducting the group work and discussion classes (section 1.11, section 1.12, Chapter 1; section 3.3 Chapter 3; Dickinson 1987; Ellis and Sinclair 1989;

Allwright 1984; 1988). It is also planned that both the teachers involved in the study and the researcher would share their experiences of the study and their subsequent impressions about and reactions to the experiment[7].

With the three sections of the control group, on the one hand, it is indicated to the teachers that they should use the conventional approach of developing reading (as stipulated in the Freshman English 101B course book). They should use the Freshman English 101B course book and teach their students how to read the passages and ask them to answer the specified reading comprehension questions. They should also give their students explanations of the items of usage mentioned in the above textbook and ask their students to do the exercises as suggested in section 2.3 and section 2.5 Chapter 2 (Madsen 1976; Tesfaye and Taylor 1976; Conroy 1985). The students have three periods of such lessons per week.

On the other hand, as clearly specified in the orientation given to the teachers, their three study sections are to follow the schedule and mode of learning outlined below.

4.231 Two periods per week of individualised reading

With the help of the instructor, a student identifies an appropriate reading level from the ***ELSIP*** and takes the book that has the appropriate level of difficulty. Instead of the placement test that should accompany the ***ELSIP***, the instructor is advised to classify his students' abilities based on their achievement in the reading comprehension and Freshman English pre-tests. It is understood that these tests are not placement tests and may not be appropriate to employ them to identify the reading level of each student. However, because the placement tests for the materials are not available, instructors have to use the test results to help them decide which level in the package (Table 4.4 above) suits each student. As

[7]Though the sharing of experience between the teachers and the researcher continued throughout the semester, as it is indicated in section 5.21 Chapter 5, it is only possible to reproduce here the reports of the students. It is indicated in section 5.2 Chapter 5 that two sections (a pair of study and control) have been excluded from the analysis since the concerned instructor was not willing to administer the post test package to his students.

students progress in their reading, or if some of them find the booklets they are using inappropriate to their level of reading, they can look for suitable ones from the collection. It is not surprising to learn, however, that most of the students found Level 1 and Level 2 readers in the ***ELSIP*** collection very easy. The majority of the students in the pilot study used Level 2 and Level 3 readers.

On the average, most students are expected to read one book in one period. Each student is supposed to write a short note describing what he/she has read and this is to be colle ted by the concerned instructor for follow-up. Each student works on his/her own, and the teacher monitors the task, helps those who need help, and checks and records all student activities. For instance, for each student he/she will have in his/her file the readability level of the book, the speed of reading, what the student does while reading (for instance, the student notes some points, selects and writes new vocabulary items, summarises the story, and the like), the student's progress in his reading, the major difficulties the student has encountered while reading, and the motivation and level of confidence of the student to tackle the reading task on his/her own.

Name .....*I.D. number*..... *Section* .....
Date ..... *Title of reading booklet* .....
Author/s ..... *pages* ..... *vocabulary number* .....

Summary .....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Comment (please include here your evaluation of your progress in reading, whether you liked the material, how fast you read, how much you can remember, what you focus on when you are reading - such as vocabulary, grammar, text organisation, etc.)
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Table 4.5 An Outline for Recording Reading Progress

The report is planned to provide the reading instructor with ample chance for follow-up, without tampering with the student's independent learning (Rogers 1983:18; Riley 1982:61; Clark 1987:103). It could also help him/her to provide his/her expertise to those students who need the guidance during the appropriate time. The report will be collected for analysis to establish the effects of the approach on the students' progress in reading in English for academic purposes (section 5.21 Chapter 5).

4.232 One period per week of group discussion

The one period per week of group discussion is fundamentally organised to achieve two things: (a) to encourage students to share their experiences of reading and to discuss what they have read, and (b) to work together the exercises on structure drawn from their Freshman English 101B course book. It is assumed that students will develop the confidence that they are learning and that they are not lagging behind other students in the control groups (Tumposky 1982). It would also facilitate learner training activities - either for group or individual students.

In other words, students are told to form groups of five or six. Student preference is taken as a major criterion for grouping. In groups, students exchange information about their reading in the reading lab, retell the stories they have read in their own words in English, comment on each other's progress in reading and learning to read, and plan together to finish doing the structure parts of the course book - Freshman English 101B. The instructor attends to one group at a time, joining in their discussion and planning of their work. He/she also takes special attention of those students who may become apprehensive of the system because of lack of confidence in their ability to operate in the new learning situation. He/she provides, sometimes, the answers to some of the structure exercises in the textbook in printed form and demonstrates through this that it is not the mere getting of an answer to a specific question that is relevant but the engagement in the plethora of language learning activities, both individual and

group. Before students discuss a unit in the structure section, each student member of the group should do his/her share of work at home assigned to him/her by the group and come to class to contribute his/her share to the discussion. Thus the one period class discussion session engenders a situation where students could develop their communicative competence (Allwright 1984; Widdowson 1990).

The pilot study lasted from January to May 1990. At the end of the programme all students, both in the control and study groups, were given a post test consisting of reading comprehension, readability and general English language tests. Students were also asked to submit a summary of their reports on their reading experiences. The results of the tests and the summary of reports of the pilot study are submitted in section 5.22 and section 5.23 Chapter 5 below. The major observations from the pilot study used to improve the main study are mentioned in section 4.31 below.

4.3 The main study

4.31 Implications of the pilot study

It is mentioned that the pilot study undertaken in the second semester of the 1989-90 academic year has indicated that the approach is feasible (section 5.2 Chapter 5). However, some important lessons have been drawn from the pilot study that helped to redesign the main study (undertaken in the first semester of 1990-91 academic year) so that both teachers and students could find the approach easy to implement. As mentioned above, the corpus study was originally planned to last one whole academic year with a new group of students and teachers. However, as it is indicated (section 1.33 Chapter 1; section 2.44 Chapter 2; section 5.3 Chapter 3), the main study has been limited to one semester. It is to be noted that initially, a pre-test, a mid-test and a post test comprising reading comprehension test, readability test and general English language ability test were prepared. Three types of questionnaires with almost the same style and content for students and one questionnaire for teacher reactions towards the individualised reading programme were also planned. However, due to the unexpected closure of the Addis Ababa University in the beginning of the second semester of 1990-91 academic year, the

test package and questionnaire had to be limited to two sets only - one for the pretest and another for the post-test.

It is pointed out that the main study has been modified by using the experiences gained from the pilot study. From the pilot study, the following have come out prominently:

4.311 The administrative authorities concerned with the academic programming of the College of Social Science first year programme have not been convinced of the effectiveness of the approach pursued. It is alleged that students are not given enough time for learning grammar; and the approach has encouraged laziness on the part of instructors. Another allegation is that the materials used are not appropriate and not informed by the officially approved syllabus of the service English courses, and, as a result, students are poorly prepared for the Freshman English examination (section 2.44 Chapter 2). The fear is quite understandable given the conditions in the country in general and the university in particular (Teshome 1990; Girma 1992; section 2.44 Chapter 2). It is evident from this that the office could block the conducting of the corpus study. Hence, some ways that do not contradict the main thesis of the approach should be sought to prove to the concerned that the students are appropriately *being prepared* for the service English final examination.

4.312 The pilot study has made it evident that some instructors, for one reason or another, have not been following the essential procedures of the approach as outlined in section 4.23 above. As a result of this, and in light of the failure of one teacher to administer the post test package, a pair of study and control group has to be excluded. As indicated below, if the main study is to succeed, the instructors to be selected should be willing to follow the procedures the approach entails and to conduct both the pretest and post test packages for their groups.

4.313 A number of students, specially those who have been excluded from taking the post test in 1989-90 academic year, report that they have not been taught what the Freshman English 101B specified. It is understandable that they have taken the

course book as an end in itself because it is thought that it determines the format and content of the Freshman English examination. The approach recommended demonstrates that there are other possible ways, more effective and motivating, of learning language (and subsequently, meeting the demands of the service English courses and the learners themselves) that could help students to succeed in examinations - not only in Freshman English but also in other academic courses. This has not helped to convince some of them that they can succeed (Geddes 1982). However, as it revealed itself later, the students have not been complaining about the approach but about the way the particular Freshman English class was handled by their instructor. Apparently, the way the instructor employed could not engender confidence in the students. In general, the following could be said about these complaints:

4.3131 In the concerned class, it might not have been possible, for various reasons,to create a situation that could generate student confidence in what was being done. In fact, it was alleged that there was not enough time for lectures on grammar. The programme as such was not designed to suit to lectures on the description of the English language for first year students.

4.3132 The students were not getting appropriate *follow-up* and their English classes represented the abuse of the individualised reading programme. All students were treated as if they did not need any help from their teacher regarding all their activities, including their attempts to learn the structural items outlined in their course books. Of course, there was no follow up of their progress in their reading.

4.3133 As indicated above, during the pilot study the ***ELSIP*** did not contain enough reading comprehension exercises, and students who had already had one semester learning Freshman English and had already adjusted themselves to the lecture method, did not want to switch to another method that required more work with less certainty about success in Freshman English examination. This had a strong bearing on the fact

> that the transition from a teacher-dominated classroom situation should have been managed more carefully, and the ***ELSIP***, in the way it was used, without the tapes and the student workbooks, was not effective, at least in this particular class, for generating individualised reading and independent work (Tumposky 1982; Geddes and Sturtridge 1982; Dickinson 1987).

Despite these problems and the constraints of time, it can be claimed that the pilot study has proved to be successful. The students' reports indicate that they have found the approach useful and the reading materials interesting (***Appendix 3***). Their reports are summarised in section 5.21 Chapter 5. The experience from the pilot study has been used to introduce some modifications in the original plan of the main study in order to make it more comprehensive, organised, and, for students and teachers alike, confidence-generating and interesting.

4.32 Selection of subjects for the main study

The pilot study has indicated, beyond any doubt, that the student-teacher variable is the most important one. It is imperative to see to it that both teachers and students identified for the programme have the willingness and readiness to try new approaches to teaching and learning language for specific purposes, and to accept with modesty the fact if the selected approach ends in some sort of an unpredicted frustration. Hence, the research could only be conducted by those teachers who are open-minded to try new ideas, and who are willing to participate in the programme (***Appendix 3.2***).

Before the selections of subjects for the corpus study, the objectives of the programme has been introduced to a number of the 1990-91 academic year Freshman English course instructors. Eight instructors have been identified, after a series of discussions, who are willing to participate if given the permission to do so by the *Department of Foreign Languages and Literature.*

Subsequently, the instructors have been given an orientation, as specified in section 4.34 below, and the system demonstrated in their respective classes as soon as they have taken

up their assignments. It has been agreed that the researcher would help instructors with the follow up and the conducting of the reading and discussion sessions. It is also planned to hold frequent meetings to discuss issues arising in the progress of the study. As a result of this arrangement, the researcher is able to get access to the thirteen sections of first year social science students. These sections are *ss03, ss04, ss06, ss08, ss09, ss11, ss12, ss13, ss16, ss17, ss18, ss19* and *ss21*. The total number of students involved in these sections is 420. This is more than 60 per cent of the annual intake of the College of Social Science Freshman Programme in the 1990-91 academic year.

Table 4.6 below indicates that 79 per cent of the students are 18 and above years old. 82 per cent are male and only 15 per cent are female. The inequity in the representation of the sexes in Addis Ababa University, as pointed out in section 2.4 in Chapter 2 and section 4.21 above, is also corroborated by the present figures taken from the main study groups. Similarly about 54 per cent of the selected population report that they come from families with a low socio-economic standard as one would imagine this figure to be more than this in light of the fact that the majority of the Ethiopian population is poor as reflected in the GNP (McNab 1989; Eshetu 1991).

Another interesting phenomenon is to what degree the rural population of the country, which is more than 80 per cent of the total population, is represented in this target population. Only 25 per cent reported that they come from rural schools, and the majority, 72 per cent, say that they are from urban centres. 71 per cent claim that Amharic is their mother tongue; and, 10 per cent and 7 per cent indicate that their mother tongue is Oromigna and Tigrigna respectively. 8 per cent of the students reported other Ethiopian languages. It might be interesting to compare this with a similar study made on first year students' mother tongue in the fall of 1968. The study indicated that 55.5 per cent were Amharic mother tongue, 23.5 per cent were Tigrigna mother tongue, 10.4 per cent were Oromigna mother tongue, 7.8 per cent other Ethiopian languages (Cooper and King 1976). Apparently, even after more than twenty years, the disparity is clear. It can be claimed that access to the university is limited, and the relevance of the educational programmes it offers to the day to day activities of the majority of the Ethiopian population remains questionable (see section 2.4 Chapter 2).

section number / per cent	Age 0	1	2	3	Sex 0	1	2	SES 0	1	2	3	Place 0	1	2	Mother tongue 0	1	2	3	4	5
ss03	1	6	22	6	1	25	9	1	1	21	12	1	20	14	1	29	1	3	1	0
n[8]=35	3	17	63	17	3	71	26	3	3	60	34	3	57	40	3	83	3	9	3	0
ss04	0	4	20	6	0	28	2	0	0	10	20	0	19	11	0	24	1	2	3	0
n=30	0	13	67	20	0	93	7	0	0	33	67	0	63	37	0	80	3	7	10	0
ss06	1	8	18	8	1	27	7	1	0	16	18	1	25	9	1	28	3	2	1	0
n=35	3	23	51	23	3	77	20	3	0	46	51	3	71	26	3	80	9	6	3	0
ss08	1	6	16	7	0	22	8	0	0	19	11	0	26	4	0	20	1	3	4	2
n=30	3	20	53	23	0	73	27	0	0	63	37	0	87	13	0	67	3	10	13	7
ss09	0	8	15	7	0	28	2	0	1	6	23	0	20	10	0	17	8	2	3	0
n=30	0	27	50	23	0	93	7	0	3	20	77	0	67	33	0	57	27	7	10	0
ss11	0	5	20	6	0	26	5	0	1	11	19	0	20	11	0	21	4	0	5	1
n=31	0	16	65	19	0	84	16	0	3	35	61	0	65	35	0	68	13	0	16	3
ss12	3	7	18	5	3	24	6	3	0	11	19	3	24	6	3	22	5	3	0	
n=33	9	21	55	15	9	73	18	9	0	33	58	9	73	18	9	67	15	9	0	

[8] *n* stands for number of students in the specified section. *ss* stands for social science first year section

ss13	5	2	21	9	5	26	6	5	0	12	20	5	25	7	5	24	2	3	0			
n=37	14	5	57	24	14	70	16	14	0	32	54	14	68	19	14	65	5	8	8	0		
ss16	2	6	19	11	2	31	5	2	1	20	15	2	29	7	2	30	4	1	1	0		
n=38	5	16	50	29	5	82	13	5	3	53	40	5	76	18	5	79	11	3	3	0		
ss17	0	5	18	10	0	32	1	0	0	7	26	0	23	10	0	25	5	1	2	0		
n=33	0	15	55	30	0	97	3	0	0	21	79	0	70	30	0	76	15	3	6	0		
ss18	0	2	14	7	0	23	0	0	0	15	8	0	20	3	0	11	5	6	1	0		
n=28	0	9	61	30	0	100	0	0	0	65	35	0	87	13	0	48	22	26	4	0		
ss19	0	10	14	9	0	26	7	0	0	15	18	0	26	7	0	25	1	1	6	0		
n=33	0	30	42	27	0	79	21	0	0	46	55	0	79	21	0	76	3	3	8	0		
ss21	0	7	15	10	0	27	5	0	1	14	17	0	26	6	0	23	3	4	2	0		
n=32	0	22	47	31	0	84	16	0	3	44	53	0	81	19	0	72	9	13	6	0		
All sec	13	76	230	101	12	345	63	12	5	177	226	12	303	105	12	299	43	31	32	3		
n=420	3	18	55	24	3	82	15	3	1	42	54	3	72	25	3	71	10	7	8	1		

Table 4.6 Description of students selected for the main study

key: 0 = no response for all attributes; **Age**: 1 = 17 years and below, 2 = 18 and 19 years old, 3 = 20 years and above; **Sex**: 1 = male, 2 = female; **SES** (family's socio-economic background: 1 = rich, 2 = middle, 3 = poor; **Place** (location of school): 1 = urban, 2 = rural; **Mother tongue**: 1 = Amharic, 2 = Oromigna, 3 = Tigrigna, 4 = other Ethiopian languages, 5 = non-Ethiopian languages.

After the sections are identified, a questionnaire (section 4.331 below) is administered to find out the demographic information and the students' knowledge of the reading process and reading strategies. A part of the information is given in Table 4.6 above. After the questionnaire, the selected population is categorised into study and control groups. The classification is based on the rationale discussed in detail in section 4.21 and section 4.31 above. Accordingly, six sections, namely *sso3, ss06, ss12, ss13, ss16,* and *ss19* are categorised as study, and *ss04, ss08, ss09, ss11, ss17, ss18,* and *ss21* as control. The demographic information compiled for the two groups indicates that there is no major difference in the subjects' attributes as indicated in Table 4.7 below. Table 4.7 below indicates that the comparison between the study and control groups using the attributes of age, sex, socio-economic standard (SES), place and mother tongue confirms that the two groups belong to the same population.

After the questionnaire, the students take the pretest package described in section 4.33 below, in two categories: readability test with Freshman English 101A test, and reading comprehension test with Freshman English 101B in two different days (***Appendix 5*** and ***Appendix 6***). Both the questionnaire and the tests are given before the students start classes. As mentioned above, the control group follow the conventional approach to learning to read in English for academic purposes, while the study group are introduced to the suggested approach. Before the study groups start classes instructors give an explanation of the basic objectives of the new approach and the procedures that should be used to realise these objectives.

Accordingly, the most important points included in the orientation are mentioned in section 4.342. The salient points mentioned include the contents of the programme, the methods of keeping a regular progress record in the student workbook, the selecting of appropriate reading cards, the system of developing a continuous assessment of one's reading performance (and subsequently, the techniques of utilising results of reading comprehension, vocabulary and reading speed exercises for improving one's reading

section number/ per cent	Age				Sex			SES				Place			Mother tongue					
	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	0	1	2	3	4	5
ssSTUDY	12	39	112	48	12	159	40	12	1	95	102	12	149	50	12	158	16	13	12	0
n=211	6	18	53	23	6	75	19	6	1	45	48	6	71	24	6	75	8	6	6	0
ssCONTROL	1	37	118	53	0	186	23	0	3	82	124	0	154	55	0	141	27	18	20	3
n=209	0	18	56	25	0	89	11	0	1	39	59	0	74	26	0	67	13	9	10	1

Table 4.7 Comparison between STUDY and CONTROL groups' variables

Key: 0 = no response given (for all attributes); **Age**: 1 = 17 years and below; 2 = 18 and 19 years old; 3 = 20 and above years old; **Sex**: 1 = male; 2 = female; SES (family socio-economic status, as perceived by the respondent): 1 = rich; 2 = middle; 3 = poor; **Place** (location of the school the respondent has come from): 1 = urban; 2 = rural; **Mother tongue** (respondent's first language): 1 = Amharic; 2 = Oromigna; 3 = Tigrigna; 4 = other Ethiopian languages; 5 = non-Ethiopian languages.

ability), and the role of the instructor in the study. The explanations are accompanied by demonstrations. Regarding the group discussion sessions, the instructors have focused on how students could form groups, select and assign learning tasks for study and discussion among group members, and seek for help, if needed, from instructors. After the series of orientations, a placement test taken from the *SRA* reading package (section 4.335 below for the description of these materials) is administered and a guiding level for each student is established Each student finds out his/her appropriate reading level as soon as it is established using the *SRA* guide for instructors (*SRA* Teacher's Guide 1985).

4.33 Tests and teaching materials

4.331 The questionnaire

As already mentioned, a questionnaire is administered to both the study and control groups to elicit information about the students' background and their knowledge about the reading process and reading strategies prior to the launching of the programme. The basic contents of the questionnaire remain the same as the ones used for the pilot study (see section 4.231 above; ***Appendix 2.2***). However, the instructions and some selected phrases in the questionnaire have been made clearer and more explicit according to the recommendations made by the instructors who have administered the questionnaire with the pilot group.

A second questionnaire with almost the same format and content has also been prepared and administered after the end of the first semester of the 1990-91 academic year (***Appendix 2.3***). Besides all the information needed about the subjects' knowledge of the reading process and strategies, the second questionnaire is designed to include information about students' attitude towards the individualised reading programme they have been following for one semester (***Appendix 3.12***). It should be noted here that the basic objective of these questionnaires is to observe any changes in students' awareness of the reading process and the use of the appropriate reading strategies and if this could be attributed to the individualised reading programme. The analysis of the students' responses to both the questionnaires is given in section 5.3113 Chapter 5 below.

Another questionnaire is given to the instructors involved in the study at the end of the programme. This is aimed at getting instructor reactions to the individualised reading programme regarding its efficacy and feasibility. Their responses are discussed in section 5.4 Chapter 5.

4.332 The reading comprehension tests

These tests are taken from the same source mentioned in section 4.222 above, for the same reasons mentioned in this section (***Appendix 4***). There are two sets of the reading comprehension test - one for pretest and another for post test. Initially, it was planned that there would be three sets to serve as pretest, mid-test and post test with the same level of difficulty. However, the latter was dropped because the study had to be discontinued at the beginning of the second semester of the 1990-91 academic year. The reading comprehension results of the pretest and post test of the study and control groups are discussed in section 5.321 Chapter 5 below.

4.333 The readability tests

It has been indicated above that the cloze procedure is used to analyze the readability of the selected first year course books as indicated in section 4.222 above (section 3.2221 Chapter 3). It was originally planned that selections would be made from all the students' first year four course books - geography, history, philosophy and political economy. The course books for Quantitative Methods and Freshman English were not considered. However, in the 1990-91 academic year, students were not required to take Marxist Philosophy and Marxist Political Economy due to a change in government policy (section 2.44 in Chapter 2 above). Hence, there were no established prerequisite courses with official course books that replaced the courses mentioned above for that year. The mentioned courses were reduced to being electives. As a result not many students registered for these courses. So,the selections were made from the geography and history course books (***Appendix 5.1*** and ***Appendix 5.2***), and the steps mentioned in section 4.222 above were followed to prepare two sets of readability tests for geography and history for pre-test and post-test. The results are discussed in section 5.322 Chapter 5.

4.334 General English language ability tests

It is quite logical to assume that the Freshman English 101A and Freshman English 101B examination papers reflect the official objectives of the service English courses in the university. Most instructors ask to be informed about the format and scope of the examination at the beginning of the semester. The instructors cover the portions well in time and train their students to enable them to pass the exams. These exams might have their own drawbacks (Teshome 1992); however, in light of the fact that they remain the sole yardstick for a pass or failure in the two service English courses, they could be selected and assumed to have the same level of difficulty to assess the linguistic improvements of the students concerned. Two sets of Freshman English 101A and two sets of Freshman English 101B tests are selected from the past examination papers, and one set consisting of Freshman English 101A and Freshman English 101B is administered at the beginning of the programme. The question of a difference in level of difficulty between the two sets of tests, or even more important (as indicated above), whether the tests satisfy the basic requirements of good tests have been considered as unimportant since they are equally officially acknowledged to certify more or less the same linguistic knowledge outlined in the course books, and they are acknowledged as official tests, whether they are bad or good. The students' raw scores (both in pretest and post test and their scores in the first semester official Freshman English 101A) and their analysis is provided in section 5.323 Chapter 5.

4.335 The teaching materials

In section 4.3133 above,it is pointed out that the ***ELSIP***, as the way they have been used, have not proved to be effective in generating the required level of confidence in students to embark upon independent work, though quite a number of the students have reported that they like the materials (section 5.211 Chapter 5; ***Appendix 3.11***). Some students seem to be unclear of what to do with the booklets identified for them. They usually wait for specific tasks to be given or instructions to be spelled out instead of trying to set them for themselves. There are no exercises whatsoever accompanying the booklets; and quite a number of the students seem to want these (section 5.211 Chapter 5). One other factor

that seems to have made the process more difficult than it should be is the fact that the students have not been provided with workbooks that should accompany the materials.

So, with the corpus study it is decided that the 1985 edition of the ***SRA*** reading packages would be used to facilitate the smooth transition from the conventional methods of learning reading to individualised reading. Despite the fact that the ***SRA*** materials overemphasise habit formation and programmed learning (Boey 1976; Eskey 1973; Nisbet and Shucksmith 1986:71), it is believed that the reading collections and exercises could be adapted to serve the purpose of independent learning (Lunzer and Gardner 1979; Fawcett 1979; Davis and Widdowson 1974). The reading passages and exercises on reading strategies have proved to help many students (section 5.3111 Chapter 5; ***Appendix 3.12***). The ***SRA*** materials, according to the editors of these collections (1985:7), are based on the following assumptions:

> *4.3351 learners differ in both their learning rate and capacity* - thus each learner can do any sets of exercises (reading comprehension, vocabulary building or reading speed) he/she feels he/she needs to improve his/her ability to read in English for academic purposes.
>
> *4.3352 the increased use of self-supporting, self-corrected materials that provide immediate and long range feedback can result in more efficient training in the use of many skills.* The student gets the feedback from his/her own work. The instructor intervenes when he/she feels that the student is in a problem and cannot proceed.
>
> ***4.3353 a student should be allowed to see and feel his/her progress.*** Each learner draws three graphs for each reading lesson for all sessions. These graphs provide him/her with some visual representation of his/her reading ability.
>
> ***4.3354*** by conducting training and education - skill getting and skill using - schooling becomes not preparation for life but life itself - thus pinning down the task to a level in which individual interests and involvement could be facilitated.

The student is engaged in reading to enhance his/her background knowledge. All other factors being constant, the learner learns how to learn.

Most of these assumptions form the groundwork of independent learning. The ***SRA*** reading exercises are designed to help students to exercise common reading strategies which include whole/part thinking, seeing relationships (cause-effect, similarities-differences), sequence and organisation, and inference and conclusion (Figure 3.2 Chapter 3). These skills and strategies are added as brief subhead or instruction with each question to alert the student-reader (Fawcett 1979).

The ***SRA*** reading exercises on comprehension and speed, and vocabulary are used to facilitate and engender independent work. It is assumed that students would ultimately move into the ***ELSIP*** and other selected materials for independent and advanced reading. The emphasis is on individualised reading, and students are encouraged to read intensively and extensively in order to help them develop their background knowledge and awareness of learning (Nuttal 1982). However, as indicated (section 1.3 Chapter 1; section 2.44 Chapter 2), students could not go beyond the ***SRA*** because of the university's closure during the second semester of 1990-91 academic year.

4.34 Mode of study

4.341 The control group

The control group followed the conventional method using the Freshman English 101A course book. In general terms, the language lessons were structure dominated with overt grammar explanation and practice, and consisted of exercises on specifically listed vocabulary, and reading passages followed by wh- or multiple choice questions. The students in this group were expected to cover all the units for the semester as specified by the Freshman English Testing Committee. Students were told to read the reading passages silently, or sometimes instructors read them for the whole class, and were asked to do the exercises that followed. The instructors supplied correct answers. The vocabulary and structure sections were done in the same manner. The teachers explicitly

explained the notes, either the glossary for the vocabulary or the grammatical notes for the structure and usage, and the students were supposed to learn these and do the usually fill-in exercises on vocabulary, and structure and usage (section 1.11 and section 1.12 Chapter 1).

4.342 The study group

There were two modes of learning. These were the individualised reading sessions conducted in the Spoken English laboratory and the group discussion sessions in the students' respective classrooms. Below is the common outline of the various learning activities students were engaged in.

4.3421 Two sessions of individualised reading per week

The students in the study group were engaged in the following learning activities using the *SRA* reading materials.

4.34211 They identified (usually with the help of the teacher) their level of reading and selected the appropriate reading cards for developing their reading comprehension and speed and vocabulary power. Students usually informed their instructors whether the reading levels of the cards they read were difficult, appropriate or easy, and asked if they could read the levels of their choice; some, of course, remained teacher-dependent throughout the entire programme.

4.34212 They recorded their achievement in reading comprehension and speed and vocabulary in their workbook. They indicated their achievement on a graph drawn on the last page of their workbook. The graph visually indicated to the student his/her cumulative performance in reading comprehension, speed and word power.

Besides helping in the planning and organising of the programme, the instructors were also engaged in the various activities that would facilitate the process. Some of the work included the following.

4.34213 They helped their students in finding appropriate reading cards. Once the students got used to the system, they started to undertake the work by themselves. At the initial stages, group leaders assisted the instructors to avoid any crowding and delay in selecting appropriate reading cards. However, later, individual students managed to handle this successfully by themselves.

4.34214 They also helped those students who had some reading problems as identified by their continuous follow-up. They gave appropriate guidance to those students who needed help - such as recommending remedial and additional work for the weaker students, and advanced work and reading for those who were ready to take up the task. This was mostly done during the discussion period but some instructors advised their students to see them in their offices for further guidance.

4.34215 They encouraged students to read better, faster and learn effective methods of developing vocabulary. They recommended the exploitation of whatever was available in the ***SRA*** resource. Besides the regular reading comprehension cards (power builders) and the reading speed cards (rate builders), they encouraged students to use the additional materials on developing higher skills of reading comprehension and vocabulary.

4.34216 They kept follow-up records of the performance of their students. They collected students' workbooks when convenient and assessed their students' comments on their own performance and learning progress. They sometimes discussed the students' comments (written in their work books) about their own reading successes or failures, or plans for improvement, and asked them how realistic they were in setting their targets.

4.34217 They compiled efficient and inefficient ways of reading from their observation and their students' workbooks to serve as topics for discussion during the discussion period (***Appendix 3.2***).

4.3422 One session per week of group work

Students grouped themselves into five or six, depending on class size, and engaged themselves in group activities demanding the participation of all members of the group. The activities included most of the following:

4.34221 They drafted a plan of work or schedule for discussing the grammatical items and the exercises specified in Freshman English 101A, and shared the portions among themselves for study on their own and later for presentation and discussion within the group.

4.34222 The students asked for any assistance they sought regarding,for instance, the explanation of a certain grammatical item. During the discussions the instructor provided the students with suggested answers to selected exercises and made it clear to them that in learning the language it was not the mere answering of the exercises that was important but the discussions and further study they did individually and in groups.

4.34223 They assigned themselves more exercises to be done at home and then for discussion in class.

In addition to the follow-up that they were supposed to do, instructors used their expertise to generate ideas that facilitated the programme. The following were among the common activities they were engaged in.

4.34224 Instructors were involved in checking whether all students were doing all the exercises their group selected. Most students did their assigned jobs with interest and involvement.

4.34225 Instructors participated with students in a group in the discussion of the language items or others, such as problems of reading with speed and comprehension.

4.34226 Depending on agreed schedule of the work, instructors took time to explain and demonstrate effective ways of writing reports and summaries as these were felt essential for promoting the discussion classes, and useful for all the courses the students took and the students reported they needed for their courses.

4.34227 Sometimes instructors invited the whole class to listen to an explanation that they might give on, say, the assessment of reading performance, vocabulary development or writing a paragraph or studying grammar - any topic or item that needed elaboration to the whole class.

4.34228 Instructors marked any assignments given to individual students. Those students who asked for more exercises to be given, such as exercises on grammar or composition, were given their choices and instructors gave their guidance to those who needed it. In fact, as Altman (1980:15) recommends, this programme required of the teacher "... all of the technical skills utilized in curriculum-centred and teacher-centred pedagogy, and much more."

This pattern was followed throughout the study period - from September 1990 to January 1991. The researcher participated in demonstrating the recommended procedure with all the study groups. At the initial stages, it was not so easy for both instructors and students to exercise the mode of study. However, after a few weeks, they were able not only to follow the recommended style but they were also contributing to its development and subsequent modification. At the end of the first semester, the post test package was administered. A questionnaire for the students (section 4.331 above) and another for the instructors were administered. The results of the questionnaires are summarized in section 5.31, for students, and section 5.4, for instructors, Chapter 5.

CHAPTER FIVE

Analysis of results

5.1 Introduction

Current research confirms that reading is an interactive process (Grabe 1991). As Williams and Moran (1989:218)) indicate, "the currently prevailing research-based view of reading, whether in L1 or L2, is that it is an interactive process, involving knowledge of the world and various types of language knowledge, any of which may interact with any other to contribute to text comprehension." Thus, reading research emphasizes the importance of the mass of knowledge, or background knowledge, the reader brings into the reading situation to reconstruct meaning from a text. As Huey (1968) argues, the reader's understanding of a text is the result of his/her reconstruction and not the mere transmission of the graphic symbols to his/her mind. The capacity to reconstruct meaning is constrained by the reader's background knowledge. It has been indicated (section 3.221 Chapter 3) that a text does not by itself carry meaning. As Rumelhart (1980) argues, a text only provides directions for readers as to how they should retrieve or construct meaning from their background knowledge or abstract knowledge structure (schemata). Similarly, "schema theory research shows that the greater the background knowledge a reader has of a text's content area, the better the reader will comprehend that text" (Carrell 1988c:244-245). On the other hand, the absence of an appropriate schema or schema specificity of a text - for instance, cultural (Stefensen and Joag-Dev 1984) or discipline (Alderson and Urquhart 1988) specific - may impair L2 reading.

Moreover, Eskey and Grabe (1988) examine the role of the knowledge of grammar and vocabulary in L2 reading from the point of view of the models of reading discussed in section 3.21 (Chapter 3). While noting that a top down model is only a model of fluent L1 readers, they also assert that it does not give due emphasis to the knowledge of grammatical structures as a prerequisite for fluent L2 reading. An interactive model, on the other hand, accounts for the conspicuous bottom up processing problems of L2

readers. Eskey and Grabe (1988:226) point out that regarding vocabulary "much evidence that supports an interactive model suggests ... that poor readers simply have not acquired automatic decoding skills. They therefore spend much more processing time in guessing from the context, which is just the sort of skill a top down model suggests is lacking." So, it is argued that the common problem of most L2 readers is not that they do not guess but that they overdo it and overdo it inaccurately.

Models are simplified constructs of a process. They cannot embody the reading process in its entirety. As Eskey and Grabe (1988:227-228) argue,

> for one thing, such models are ...models of the ideal, completely fluent reader with completely developed knowledge systems and skills; whereas the second language reader is, almost by definition, a developing reader with gaps and limitations in both of these categories. For another, we have no clear idea at this time of how readers in general combine bottom up and top down processes, much less how particular readers do so.

All these may constrain the models to be of great practical value to L2 reading instruction. So, the practice of developing L2 reading cannot be merely reduced to the translation of these models into practical classroom prescriptions. All the variables affecting ESL/EFL reading classroom situations should be taken into consideration when designing an approach to developing reading in English for academic purposes.

Research (section 2.6 and section 2.7 Chapter 2) indicates that the social science first year students do not have adequate experience in reading in English and the service English courses have not helped much to improve the students' reading ability in English. The service English courses in the university, with their emphasis on teaching usage or the formal descriptions of a language, promote the assumption that the mastery of usage would enable students to read their academic courses in English. It seems that this assumption has, as a result, discouraged the attempt to help students to develop their reading ability - mastery of the language rules has been taken as all what students need. It is assumed that if they master the language, as the Freshman English courses in Addis Ababa University seem to imply, they can become fluent readers. It has been pointed out that such an approach was prevalent elsewhere in the late 1970s and early 1980s (section

3.1 Chapter 3). However, it seems that this approach to reading instruction in the university has not helped to narrow the gap between the students' reading ability and the readability level of their course books (Gebremedhin 1988; section 2.6 Chapter 2).

Strictly speaking, thi gap (the gap between prior knowledge and the required knowledge) can be qualified as the lack of what Eskey and Grabe (1988) term as the 'critical mass of knowledge', or, according to schema theorists, the essential systemic and schematic knowledge (Widdowson 1990). Elsewhere in this study, it is termed as background knowledge. Regarding this gap, some major assumptions could be made:

> Firstly, it may not be possible to explicitly describe the gap in quantitative terms - results extracted from administering language tests, such as reading comprehension tests or even readability formulae (cloze tests in this case) may not qualify the gap in the process of reading. As Alderson (1984) argues "doing a comprehension test and actually reading are probably not the same thing". Moreover, it might be assumed that students may understand a text but they may lack the combined knowledge of syntax and lexis to supply a required item in a cloze test, for instance (Alderson 1984). While the tests may emphasize the knowledge of discrete linguistic elements, the gap referred to is a combination of all the components of the reading process that may not possibly be represented in numerical terms. In other words, results of such tests may yield a partial explanation of the process of reading. By implication, as Alderson (1984) argues, it is not clear that testing, or its outcome, is relevant to teaching.
>
> Secondly, the gap is variable among the population. It is constrained by individual differences (Dickinson 1987; Clark 1987) accentuated by various factors including the educational, socio-cultural and linguistic background discussed in section 2.2 and section 2.3 (Chapter 2). Thus, firstly, it might be misleading to assume that all learners need the same learning items; secondly, it might be difficult to list the learning items in a generally acceptable way; and lastly, the learning outcome "is not just that a certain bit of the syllabus is taught, or a certain planned method is used, or that a certain planned atmosphere is created", but "it will be the result of

interactive processes, and therefore necessarily different from any plans" (Allwright and Bailey 1991:22-3). It is claimed that this, that is, the interactive process, is what may bridge the gap. Moreover, the question of the listing of foreign language learning items in general *per se* has remained as the source for controversy in language teaching for specific purposes for many years, and applied linguists do not have the same approach to the issue (see, for instance, on issues of ELT syllabus design, Brumfit 1984; or ELT curriculum and instruction, Clark 1987, White 1987).

Thirdly, based on the survey of the above reading (section 3.3 Chapter 3) and by assuming language instruction as a component of the educational process (Widdowson 1983), it is believed that students could be helped to bridge the gap by taking the activity as a short term objective in the process of learning to learn and learning through discovery (Holec 1980; Rogers 1983). It is believed that no one can explain the gap better than the learners themselves. This approach stipulates that learners are at the centre of the teaching learning process (Dickinson 1987). A learner centred approach dictates that learners are active participants in the process of educating themselves and learning is not equated with the mere decoding of discrete linguistic elements from teachers and course books.

And finally, attempts to bridge this gap can be tied to the major educational objectives of the university, that is, to promote independent learning which is characteristic of many institutions of higher learning worldwide. As it is stated in section 2.7 Chapter 2 above, Abebe (1987) argues that *teaching as telling* has to give way to *learning how to learn* - a change of focus from looking for an *elaborate* language teaching methodology to an approach (Allwright and Bailey 1991) to facilitating students' *learning to learn.*

It has been pointed out that this gap is created because of the students' lack of the 'critical mass of knowledge' or background knowledge, defined in broad terms. The question addressed in the current study (section 1.1 Chapter 1) is whether it is possible to help students develop their background knowledge (systemic and schematic) to enhance their

ability in reading in English for academic purposes. So, the study is an attempt to test the feasibility of a possible approach to reading instruction that helps students to develop their ability to read in English for academic purposes.

Admittedly, as Eskey and Grabe (1988) point out, whatever the design of a reading programme, there are at least three programme constants:

> The first is the *quantity of reading*. Any programme designed to facilitate students' reading ability considers allowing students to do enough reading. No programme of reading can claim the name without allowing students to do some reading. Eskey and Grabe (1988) argue that students learn to read by reading, not by doing exercises. Nuttal (1982) shares a similar view.
>
> The second is the *relevance of the materials to students' needs and interests.* Elsewhere it has been stated that the materials selected for reading should help students to learn to read their academic course books. The materials should also provide students with the experience to trial various reading strategies without the students feeling that they are being *tested* (section 3.2221 Chapter 3).
>
> The last programme constant is the *role of the teacher.* The teacher of reading in a foreign language has the special responsibility for encouraging students to read in a language that is specifically used for academic purposes. He/she has the responsibility for setting the environment for reading, providing suggested reading materials, and, most important, handling learner training sessions, for instance, in individualised reading programmes (section 4.2 and section 4.3 Chapter 4).

In the preceding chapter, it has been stated that the students in the study group during the pilot and the main study sessions have been provided with ***ELSIP*** and ***SRA*** reading materials respectively as suggested materials for developing reading fluency. As described above (section 3.222 Chapter 3), these collections provide ample and interesting reading materials for L2 learners. Moreover, the two reading packages were used mainly for the following two major reasons:

one cause for misunderstanding in the argument has been the use of the same words to imply different concepts. And this is true with the terms *styles, skills* and *strategies.* Alderson and Urquhart take *skills* and *strategies* as referring to different concepts (see the above quotation), while Nuttal (1985:199) takes them as synonymous. The component *skills* mentioned by Grabe (1991, above, section 3.221) and *skills* in the sense used by Alderson and Urquhart may imply different aspects. When used to imply different aspects of reading

> one may distinguish the terms by defining a skill as an acquired ability, which has been automatised and operates largely sub-consciously, whereas strategy is a conscious procedure carried out in order to solve a problem. ... Thus a fluent reader may possess the skill of rapid, automatic word recognition, but may resort to strategies such as phonological encoding when faced with an unfamiliar word (Williams and Moran 1989:223).

Nisbet and Shucksmith (1986:6) refer to strategies as "integrated sequences of procedures selected with a purpose in view." Another common term employed in reference to reader-text interaction is *style.* While strategies imply a conscious effort on the part of the reader, styles seem to refer to learned habits. In other words, styles denote readers' behavioural response to text. As instances of learning styles, Wilson(1981:18) observes that some learners appear "to have mainly a 'reproductive' or rote learning conception of study in which learning is equated to 'committing to memory'; others study with a view to extracting meaning from what they read and relating general relationship between quantitative and qualitative conception of learning principles to their current stock of ideas and personal representations of reality." Reading style may also be related to learners' experience with reading. Grabe (1991) points out that more often researchers of EFL reading do not try to find out the extent of literacy skills of students in their first language. This is usually taken for granted.

> Assuming that students have relatively similar reading skills in their first languages, a further question can be posed: To what extent do students use, interpret, or value reading material in their first language? Students who come from cultures where written material represents "truth" might tend not to challenge or reinterpret texts in light of other texts, but will tend to memorize "knowledge." Students who have not had easy access to libraries might be less likely to look for alternative sources of information or question the relative strengths and weaknesses of the texts they encounter. Students who come from communities with limited

> literacy among the population may downplay the importance of literacy skills and do little extensive reading....In sum, the social context of students' uses of reading in their first languages, and their access to texts, may have a profound effect on their abilities to develop academic reading skills in English (Grabe 1991:389).

Grabe's description could be envisaged to imply a number of crucial elements in reading and learning to read in L2 in EFL contexts. Firstly, it would be wrong to assume that students, coming as they do from different cultural and linguistic settings coupled with the educational problems (section 2.2 Chapter 2; section 3.1 above) and with many languages without any writing system (section 2.1 and section 2.2 Chapter 2 above), would have similar reading or literacy skills in their first languages. The general consensus is that many students do not read in their first languages. They have not developed the skill of reading and they do not possess a strong reading background and the "critical mass of knowledge" (Grabe 1986) to cope with the demands of reading in English for academic purposes. There is also a significant variation in students' ability to operate in English.

Secondly, to relate this to the earlier contention, raised by Alderson and Urquhart (1984), when he mentions literacy skills, Grabe might be referring to the macro-skill of reading or even to learning to read. The term 'skills' can also be extended to include skills in learning to read in English as a foreign language for specific purposes. This qualification may involve the 'strategies' students employ to learn to read or to read to learn their academic courses in English.

One may wonder whether it would not be appropriate, for practical purposes, to assume the notions of 'style', 'skills', and 'strategies' to lie on a continuum whereby the two ends are represented by, on one side, the unconscious or, possibly, subconscious (that has become automatic) and, on the other, the conscious or deliberate without denying the fact that they are organically related. The unconscious would embody the 'styles' learned through different forms of exposure and fostering themselves as habits, such as eye movements, regression, vocalization, speed, or skipping texts (Williams and Moran 1989). Nuttal (1982) and Grellet (1981) consider skimming, scanning, intensive reading and extensive reading as styles. This inclusion may be acceptable if these are considered in

behavioural terms, such as which a reader resorts to suit his/her purpose, background knowledge, and the like. The conscious would signify all deliberate actions that readers take to tackle the task of reading or learning to read.

It has been pointed out that Nuttal (1982) takes 'skills' and 'strategies' as synonymous. Others would prefer to use skills to refer to assumed discrete categories of reading, such as the ones mentioned in Figure 3.2 above. Williams and Moran (1989:223) state that the skills categories are related to language-related and reason-related skills. They also distinguish 'skills' and 'strategies' by qualifying a 'skill' as an "acquired ability which has been automatised and operates largely subconsciously" (compare this with the notion of component 'skills' mentioned by Grabe in section 3.221, this chapter). A 'strategy', according to Williams and Moran, is a "conscious procedure carried out in order to solve a problem." In other words a reader may have the skill of "rapid, automatic word recognition" and he/she may employ strategies such as "phonological encoding when faced with an unfamiliar word." This might be considered as a narrow definition of strategies.

From a broader perspective, and by taking into account the various learning strategies students in EFL contexts employ, strategies should be defined to reflect these conscious activities - activities not only for solving problems but also finding the course of one's own learning to read in L2. Rubin (1987:19) considers 'strategies' as "any set of operations, steps, plans, routines used by the learner to facilitate the obtaining, storage, retrieval and use of information, ...that is, what learners *do* to learn and *do to regulate* their learning." This assumption is drawn from the studies on metacognition and reading mentioned above, section 3.221, this chapter.

This definition shifts the emphasis from the notion of whether reading is made up of subskills or not to the fluent reader, who sets the process of reading in motion by actively interacting with the text - the interaction realized by the use of appropriate strategies - to invest meaning on it. Such a construct for strategies will not only be applied to the process of reading but also to the process of learning to read in a foreign language. In a nut-shell, as Nisbet and Shucksmith (1986:6) indicate, strategies can be contrived to refer to

in Freshman English. The cut-off points used to summarize the scores are as follows: 85 per cent and above ***A***, 71 per cent to 84 per cent ***B***, 50 per cent to 70 per cent ***C***, 36 per cent to 49 ***D***, and 35 and below ***F***. A grade of ***C*** is considered a pass mark.

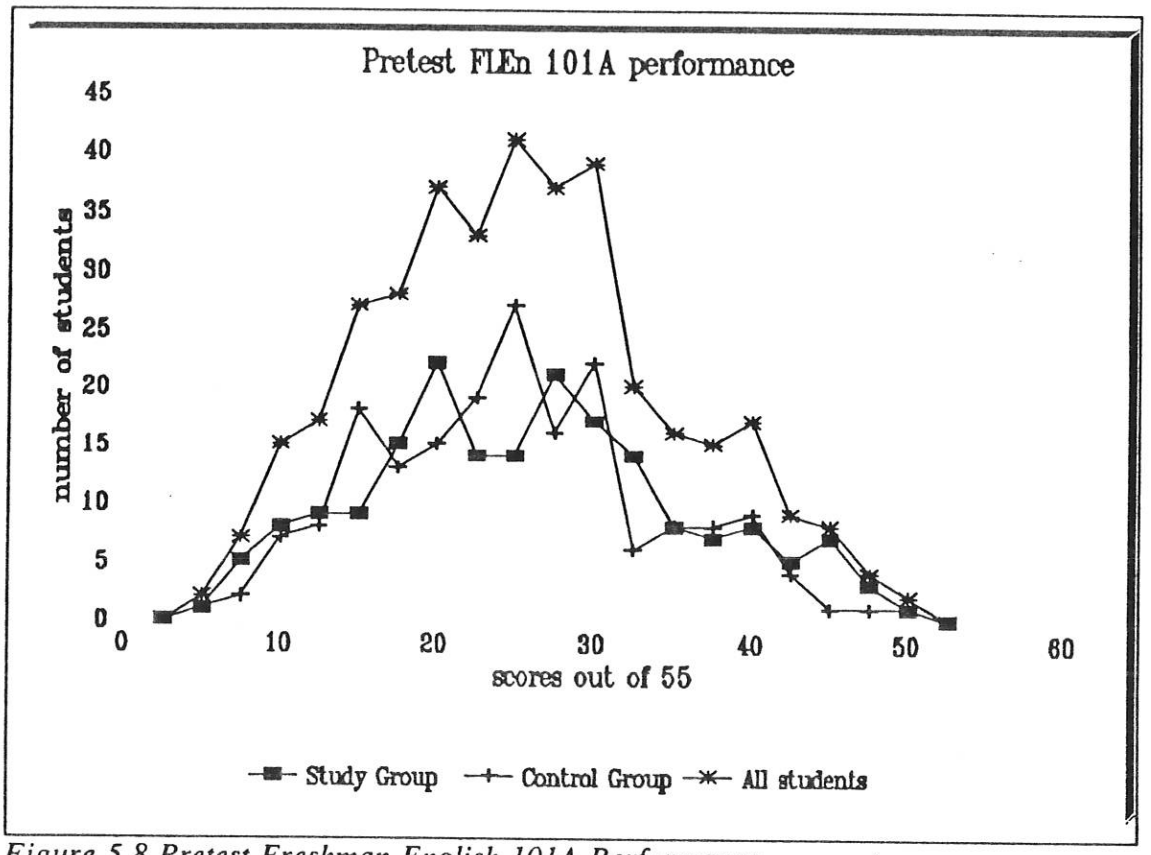

Figure 5.8 Pretest Freshman English 101A Performance

According to Figure 5.8 above (see Table 5.12 also), 374 students have taken the Freshman English 101A pretest. If the cut-off points for scores outlined above are used, about 1 per cent (6 students), 9 per cent (34 students), 34 per cent (127 students), 29 per cent (110 students) and 26 per cent (97 students) of the students get ***A***, ***B***, ***C***, ***D*** and ***F*** respectively in the Freshman English 101A pretest. This shows that more than 50 per cent of the students have managed to get a pass score in the course. It is to be noted that these students have just joined the university and it is confirmed that they do not have strong background knowledge in English (section 2.6 Chapter 2). However, these results indicate that more than half of the students could pass the Freshman English test without attending the course for a semester. These results may not necessarily be due to chance. It could be assumed that either the test is not reliable and valid, or that about 50 per cent

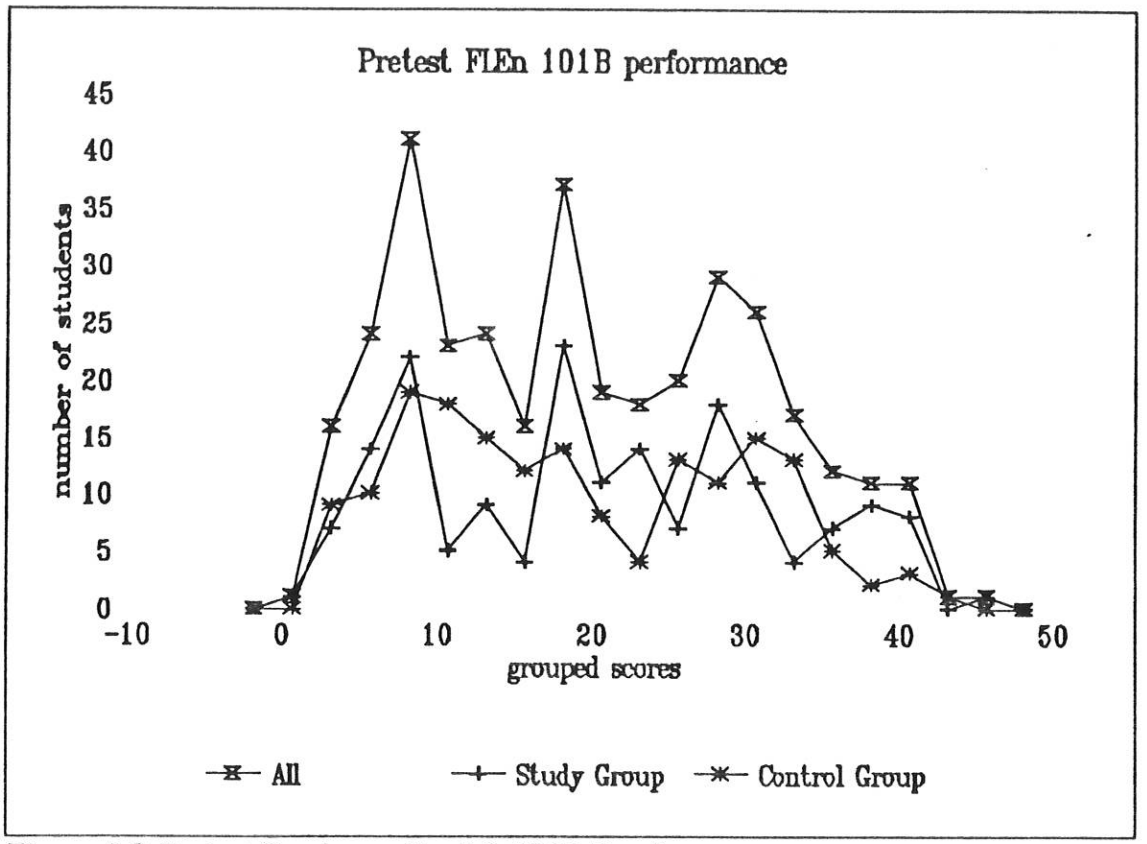

Figure 5.9 Pretest Freshman English 101B Results

of the students do not need to take Freshman English 101A for a semester - possibly a waste of manpower and resources. It might as well be justifiable to expect higher grades than these for the total population at the end of the study. It seems that this test as a tool to assess progress in learning through independent work might also be questionable.

Table 5.12 shows that out of the 186 students in the study group who have taken the Freshman English 101A pretest, about 2 per cent (4 students), 11 per cent (20 students), 36 per cent (67 students), 21 per cent (40 students) and 29 per cent (55 students), have scored ***A***, ***B***, ***C***, ***D***, and ***F*** respectively. About 50 per cent of the students have scored ***C*** and above. In the control group (188 students), 1 per cent (2 students), 7 per cent (14 students), 32 per cent (60 students), 37 per cent (70 students) and 22 per cent (42 students) of the students have scored ***A***, ***B***, ***C***, ***D*** and ***F*** respectively. In other words, about 40 per cent of the students in the control group have managed to pass the course.

Group [27]	Test	number of stds.	means	standrd deviatn	standrd error	F-val	2-tail prob.	Pooled Variance Estimate			Separate Variance Estimate			remark
								t-value	Deg. of freedm	2-tail prob.	t-value	Deg. of freedm	2-tail prob.	
Study	pretest	186	25.9247	10.107	.741	1.30	.076	1.17	372	.244	1.17	364.82	.244	not signif.
Contrl	pretest	188	24.7766	8.872	.647									
Study	posttest	203	32.8768	10.144	.712	1.05	.764	.37	330	.711	.37	267.97	.713	not signif.
Contrl	posttest	129	32.4496	10.380	.914									
Group	Test	number of stds.	means	standrd deviatn	standrd error	mean differ.	st.devtn differ	st.error differ.	corr.	2-tail prob.	t-value	Deg. of freedm	2-tail prob.	remark
Study	pretest	184	25.9076	10.150	.748	-7.5435	6.616	.488	.782	.000	-15.47	183	.000	signif.
Study	posttest	184	33.4511	9.893	.729									
Contrl	pretest	117	24.8376	8.673	.802	-7.7949	6.031	.558	.804	.000	-13.98	116	.000	signif.
Contrl	posttest	117	32.6325	10.090	.933									

Table 5.13 T-test for level of significance of means' difference for Freshman English 101A performance of both groups (corpus study)

[27]The first part of the table (consisting of the first five rows) shows the *t-test* for the means' difference of the study and control groups in the pretest and post test. The items on the first row are number of students who took the test, means, standard deviations, standard errors, F-value, 2-tail prob., t-value, degrees of freedom, 2-tail prob. (the last three under pooled variance), t-value, degrees of freedom, 2-tail prob. (under separate variance estimate), and lastly, remark or *level of significance*.

The second part of the table (rows 7 to 11) indicates the paired samples t-test of the means' difference of each group during the pretest and the post test. The subheadings for this part (row 7) are number of students who took the test, means, standard deviations, standard errors, means' difference, standard deviation difference, standard error difference, corr., 2-tail probability, t-value, degrees of freedom, 2-tail probability, and remark or *level of significance*.

The means and standard deviations of the scores of the study (Table 5.13) (number = 186) and control (number = 188) groups in Freshman English 101A pretest are 25.9 and 10.1 (study), and 24.8 and 8.9 (control). The mean difference between the two groups is statistically not significant at p = 0.05. Hence, it can be assumed that the two groups have the same level of ability as assessed by the Freshman English 101A test.

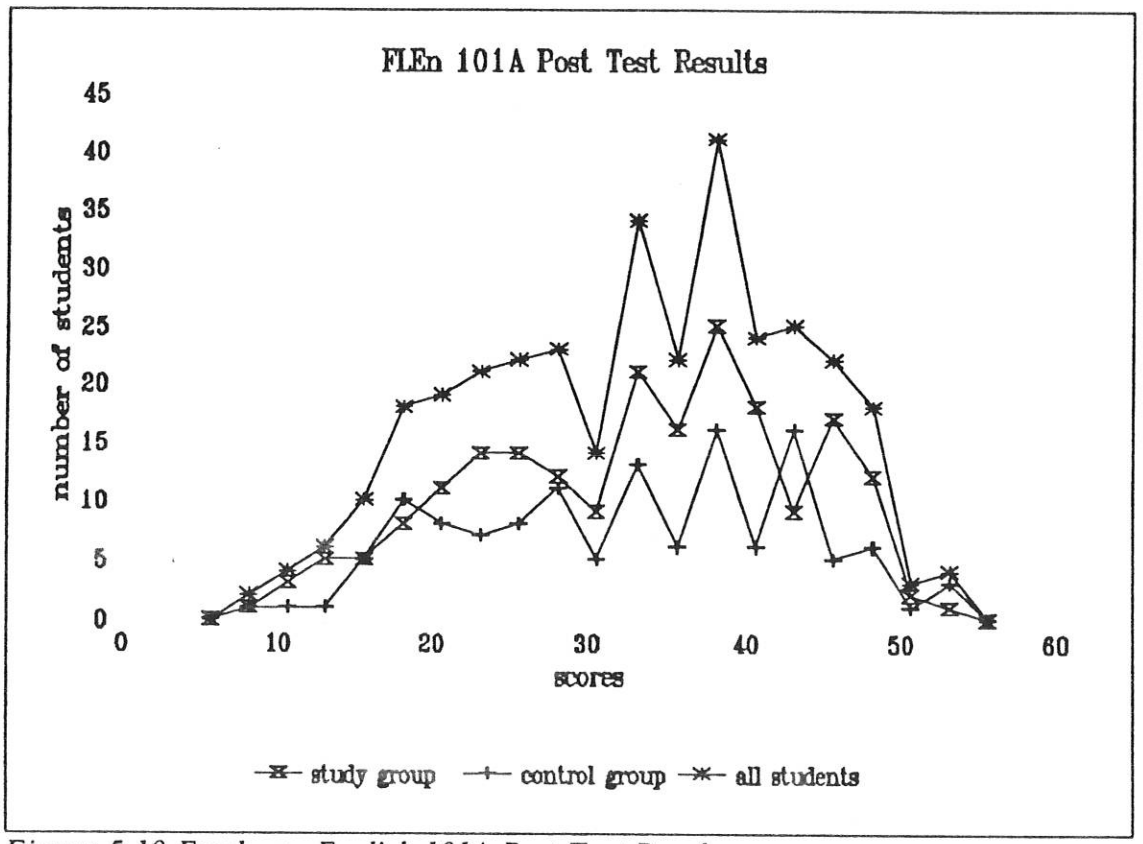

Figure 5.10 Freshman English 101A Post Test Results

In addition to the test in Freshman English 101A, the pretest package includes a test in Freshman English 101B - the second part of the first year service English courses. In general terms, this test is used to certify that a student who gets a pass in it is able to do most of his/her academic requirements without a serious linguistic constraint, that is, the successful student is assumed that he/she can read his/her academic course books without any problem, summarize and take notes from various references and lectures and produce at least a coherent paragraph in English (in order to take up the last in the series - Sophomore English - which is more or less a writing course). Thus, it can be assumed

that the demands of the Freshman English 101B test is relatively higher than that of Freshman English 101A.

A total of 357 students have taken the pretest on Freshman English 101B (Table 5.12). As indicated in Figure 10 above, the scores are out of 50. Conventionally, Freshman English 101B scores are interpreted in letter forms as indicated above (Table 5.12). It has been indicated that the cut-off points for Freshman English 101B scores follow the same pattern as those for Freshman English 101A. The usual difference is the cut-off points for ***F*** and ***D***. ***F*** is mostly 40 and below, and ***D*** is between 41 and 49. For the sake of convenience, however, the same cut-off points have been used for both tests to compile the data (***Appendix 7.2*** provides the entire ray of scores).

Accordingly, out of the 357 students, 8 per cent (30 students), 27 per cent (97 students), 19 per cent (67 students), and 45 per cent (162 students) of the students have scored ***B***, ***C***, ***D***, and ***F*** (Table 5.12). Apparently, the majority of the students have found the Freshman English 101B pretest more difficult than the Freshman English 101A pretest. However, about 35 per cent of the students have managed to get scores that would have enabled them to be certified as having taken the bulk of the requirement of the service English courses. They would have only been required to take the last part of the series for a single semester only. As it has been indicated above, the two sets of tests (a) might not really test what the service English courses are thought to be teaching, and (b) they may not be good indicators of students' progress in their linguistic ability (see section 2.6 where it is indicated that students who have already completed the three courses of service English, and passed the three tests, have been found incompetent to take down acceptable notes from their reading, that is, they seemed to be poor in their reading and linguistic abilities - in specific terms, they could not distinguish between main points and supporting details; see ***Appendix 1.2***).

Of course, one may ask why these tests have been selected for the study in order to qualify any linguistic improvement students may gain as a result of the proposed approach to reading instruction if they are claimed to be deficient. Firstly, the tests indicate official requirements. Whether they are deficient or not, teachers and students work towards

Group [28]	Test	number of stds.	means	standrd deviatn	standrd error	F-val	2-tail prob.	Pooled Variance Estimate			Separate Variance Estimate			remark
								t-value	Deg. of freedm	2-tail prob.	t-value	Deg. of freedm	2-tail prob.	
Study	pretest	175	20.3886	11.146	.843	1.20	.217	1.18	355	.240	1.18	348.95	.241	not signif.
Contrl	pretest	182	19.0604	10.158	.753									
Study	posttest	182	23.0385	9.029	.669	1.23	.226	.09	305	.932	.09	283.14	.930	not signif.
Contrl	posttest	125	22.9520	8.157	.730									
Group	Test	number of stds.	means	standrd deviatn	standrd error	mean differ.	st.devt ndiffe r	st.error differ.	corr.	2-tail prob.	t-value	Deg. of freedm	2-tail prob.	remark
Study	pretest	154	20.6104	11.161	.899	-3.1623	7.384	.595	.753	.000	-5.31	153	.000	signif.
Study	posttest	154	23.7727	9.195	.741									
Contrl	pretest	116	19.5862	10.299	.956	-3.6034	6.477	.601	.778	.000	-5.99	115	.000	signif.
Contrl	posttest	116	23.1897	8.270	.768									

Table 5.14 T-test for level of significance of means' difference for Freshman English 101B performance of both groups (corpus study)

[28]The first part of the table (consisting of the first five rows) indicates the *t-test* for the means' difference of the study and control groups in the pretest and post test. The items on the first row are number of students who took the test, means, standard deviations, standard errors, F-value, 2-tail prob., t-value, degrees of freedom, 2-tail prob. (the last three under pooled variance), t-value, degrees of freedom, 2-tail prob. (under separate variance estimate), and lastly, remark or *level of significance.*

The second part of the table (rows 7 to 11) indicates the paired samples t-test of the means' difference of each group during the pretest and the post test. The subheadings for this part (row 7) are number of students who took the test, means, standard deviations, standard errors, means' difference, standard deviation difference, standard error difference, corr., 2-tail probability, t-value, degrees of freedom, 2-tail probability, and remark or *level of significance.*

achieving the requirements set by these tests. This attitude has been taken as a significant factor constraining the nature of the service English language classroom at the first year level (section 4.1 Chapter 4 for teachers and students' attitude). For most students, they take the Freshman English courses to meet the academic requirement -to pass the tests. And, most teachers train their students to pass the tests. Secondly, despite their deficiencies, the tests can be used as indicative, as guide line, locally produced and meant for students whose linguistic abilities could be imagined. In other words, they are not remote tests for remote students despite their deficiencies.

As indicated in Table 5.12, out of the 357 students, 175 and 182 belong to the study and control groups respectively. Figure 5.10 shows that about 1 per cent (1 student), 12 per cent (22 students), 24 per cent (42 students), 22 per cent (38 students), and 41 per cent (72 students) of the students in the study group have scored ***A***, ***B***, ***C***, ***D***, and ***F*** respectively. In the control group, 4 per cent (8 students), 30 per cent (55 students), 16 per cent (29 students), and 49 per cent (90 students) of the students score ***B***, ***C***, ***D*** and ***F*** respectively. It is evident that this test is more difficult than the Freshman English 101A test. Despite this, about 46 per cent of the study group and 34 per cent of the control group have managed to pass the test.

The above description, however, does not indicate whether the two groups have the same level of ability or not. The major objective of the pretest is, as noted before, to establish that the two groups have similar levels of linguistic ability as measured by the particular test. As it is indicated in Table 5.14, the t-statistic of the scores displays that the means and standard deviations of the study and control groups in the Freshman English 101B pretest are 20.388 and 11.146 (study) and 19.060 and 10.158 (control). Apparently, the difference between the two means is indicated as not significant. Hence, the two groups can be taken to belong to the same population.

As mentioned above, at the end of the first semester of the 1990 - 1991, both groups took the post test package which included Freshman English 101A and Freshman English 101B tests. Table 5.12 above indicates the summary of the results of both tests. A total of 332 and 307 students belonging to the study and control groups have taken Freshman English

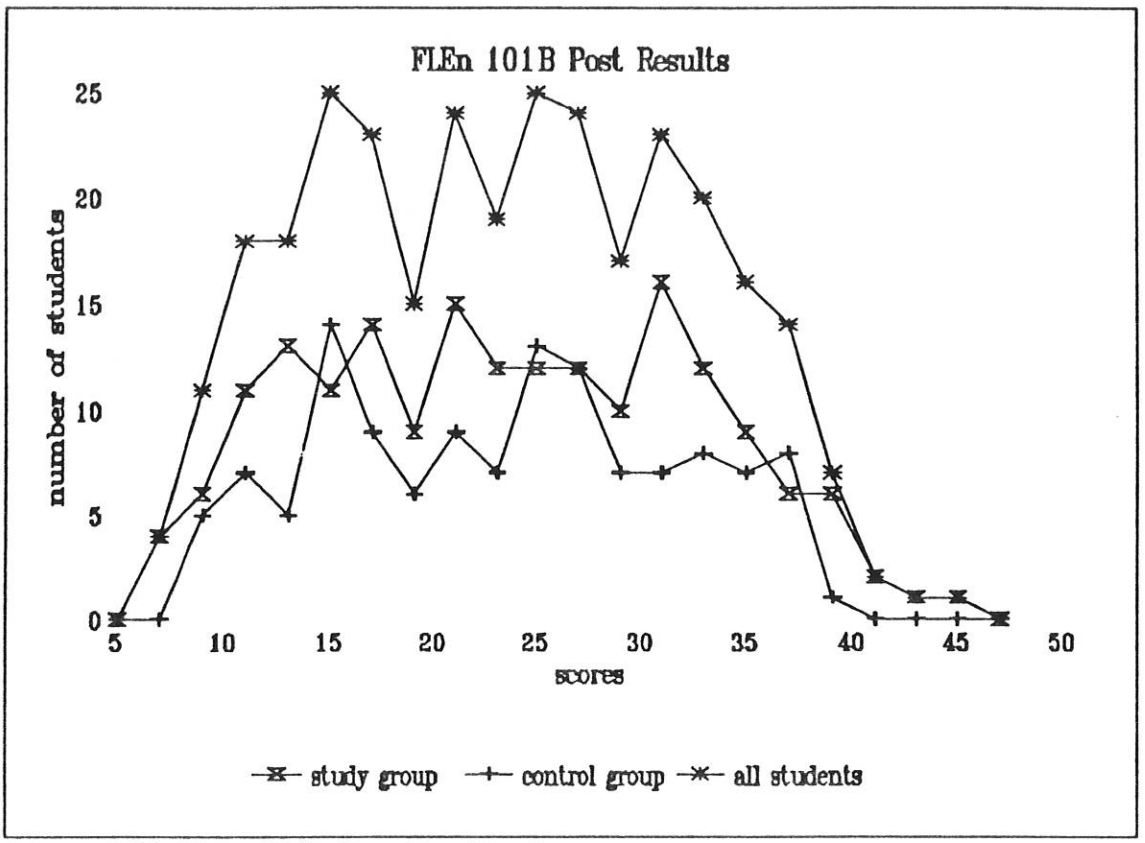

Figure 5.11 FLEn 101B Post Test Results

101A and Freshman English 101B respectively.

If the above suggested cut-off points for both courses are taken (Table 5.12), as indicated in Figure 5.10 above, about 8 per cent (25 students), 25 per cent (84 students), 36 per cent (121 students), 19 per cent (62 students) and 12 per cent (40 students) of the students have scored ***A***, ***B***, ***C***, ***D***, and ***F*** respectively in the Freshman English 101A post test. In the study group, 7 per cent (15 students), 24 per cent (50 students), 38 per cent (77 students), 19 per cent (39 students), and 11 per cent (22 students) of the students have scored ***A***, ***B***, ***C***, ***D***, and ***F*** respectively. In the control group, 8 per cent (10 students), 26 per cent (34 students), 34 per cent (44 students), 18 per cent (23 students), and 14 per cent (18 students) of the students have scores of ***A***, ***B***, ***C***, ***D***, and ***F*** respectively.

Moreover, about 1 per cent (2 students), 7 per cent (23 students), 37 per cent (114 students), 22 per cent (69 students), and 32 per cent (99 students) of the students have earned ***A***, ***B***, ***C***, ***D***, and ***F*** respectively in Freshman English 101B. Accordingly, in the

study group, about 1 per cent (2 students), 8 per cent (14 students), 36 per cent (65 students), 23 per cent (42 students), and 32 per cent (59 students) have scored ***A***, ***B***, ***C***, ***D***, and ***F*** respectively. In the control group, 7 per cent (9 students), 39 per cent (49 students), 22 per cent (27 students), and 32 per cent (40 students) have scored ***B***, ***C***, ***D***, and ***F*** respectively (Table 5.12).

As indicated in Table 5.13, the Freshman English 101A post test scores of the study and control groups have yielded the following means and standard deviations: 32.8 and 10.14 (study), and 32.44 and 10.38 (control). Ostensibly, the two means are almost the same, and thus, it cannot be claimed that one group has done better than the other. An investigation of the difference in performance of the study group between Freshman English 101A pretest and post test (Table 5.13) reveals that the means and standard deviations of the scores in the two tests are 25.90 and 10.15 (pretest), and 33.45 and 9.89 (post test). The difference between the two means is statistically significant at $p < 0.05$. Hence, it can be concluded that the study group have performed significantly better in the Freshman English 101A post test than in the pretest.

However, such an improvement can only be attributed to the approach employed in the study groups if it is established that the control group have not performed better in the post test than in the pretest. It is portrayed above that there is no significant difference between the means of the study and control groups in the Freshman English 101A post test. The paired samples t-test of the Freshman English 101A pretest and post test of the control group (Table 5.13) indicates the following: the means and standard deviations of the two tests are 24.8376 and 8.67 (pretest), and 32.6325 and 10.09 (post test). There is a significant difference between the two means, and it is indicated that the control group have done better in the post test than in the pretest. Thus, it may be difficult to attribute the linguistic improvement displayed by the study group exclusively to the approach used with this group. However, it may be appropriate to assume that the approach is at least as effective, if not better than, the conventional one used with the control group. All other things being constant, the study group have proved to be as competent as the control group in a test believed to be solely guided by the contents of the Freshman English 101A course book in a relatively the same period of time. However, it cannot be claimed that

the study group have performed better than the control group in this particular test. What the approach seems to have provided the students with is the ability to tackle a language test that is claimed to be mainly biased towards the contents of the Freshman English course book. It is to be noted that students have not had any formal instruction specifically based on the Freshman English course book. They seemed to manage doing that by themselves quite with ease.

The Freshman English 101B post test results (Table 5.14) indicate that the means and standard deviations of the study and control groups are 23.038 and 9.029 (study), and 22.952 and 8.157 (control). The t-test of the significance of the difference between means reveals that the two means are not significantly different. In other words, no group have performed better than the other in the Freshman English 101B post test. A paired samples t-test of the means (means = 20.61 and 23.77; standard deviation 11.16 and 9.19 respectively) of the study group in the Freshman English 101B pretest and post test shows that the difference between the means is statistically significant at $p < 0.05$. Similarly, the paired samples t-test of the means (means = 19.58 and 23.18; standard deviation 10.29 and 8.27 respectively) of the control group indicates that the difference between the means is statistically significant at $p < 0.05$. Thus, though it can be asserted that both have improved in their performance in Freshman English 101B, the compiled data is no sufficient to argue that the study group have performed better than the control group as a result of the approach pursued. But it should be emphasized that the study group have not lagged behind the control group as was feared otherwise by the statements of the students discussed in section 5.31 above (see also for comments about the study group in section 4.1 Chapter 4).

Finally, the scores of the students in the first semester Freshman English 101A examination in 1990-91 academic year are taken into consideration for assessing the effects of the reading approach this study is concerned with (Table 5.14). The scores of 382 first year students are compiled for the comparison. Out of the 382 students, 207 and 175 students belong to the study and control groups respectively. As indicated in Figure 5.12 above, if the above suggested cut-off points for Freshman English 101A are employed, about 10 per cent (39 students), 36 per cent (138 students), 37 per cent (141

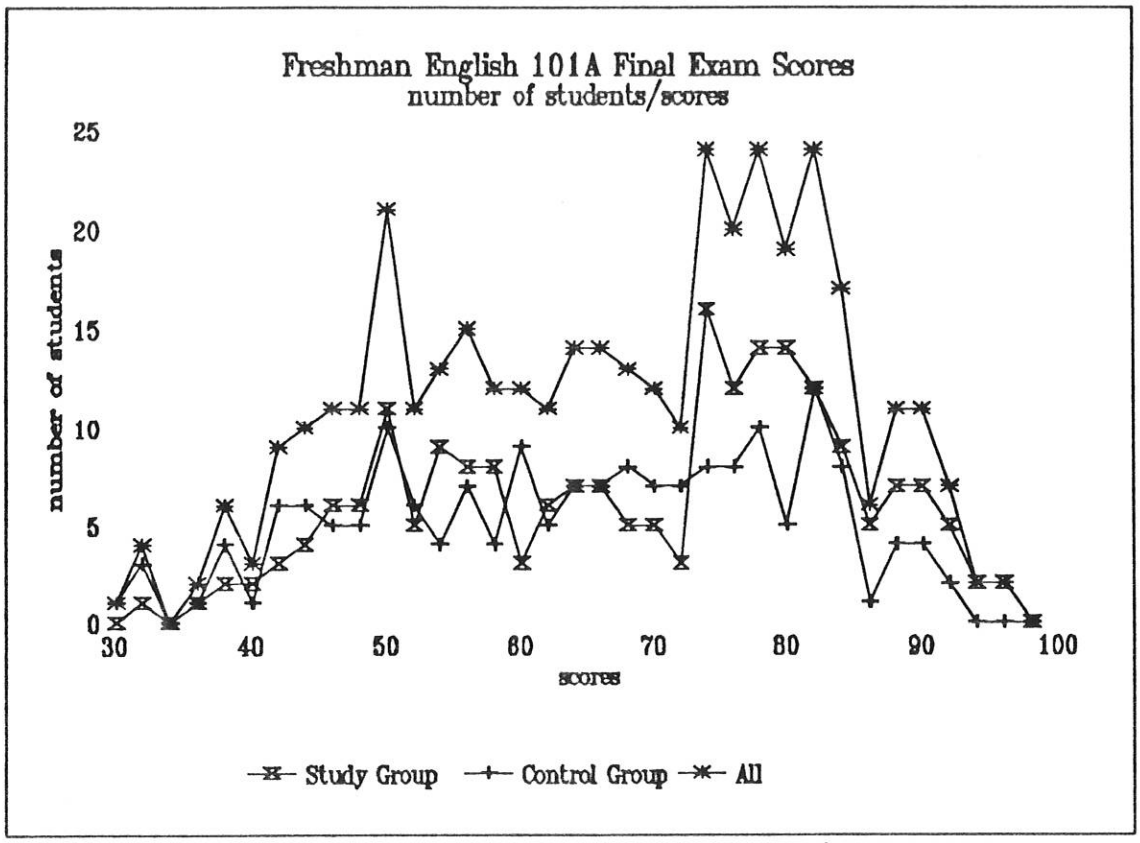

Figure 5.12 Freshman English 101A Final Examination Results

students), 15 per cent (57 students) and 2 per cent (6 students) of the students in both groups have scored ***A***, ***B***, ***C***, ***D***, and ***F*** respectively in the Freshman English 101A first semester final examination.

It may be essential to note how these letter grades distribute between the two groups. The scores of 207 students from the study group and 175 students from the control group have been compiled for the analysis. Out of the 207 students in the study group, as Figure 5.13 above shows, about 13 per cent (28 students), 38 per cent (80 students), 34 per cent (71 students), 12 per cent (26 students), and 1 per cent (2 students) of the students have earned ***A***, ***B***, ***C***, ***D***, and ***F*** respectively in the Freshman English 101A first semester examination. Similarly, out of the 175 students in the control group, 6 per cent (11 students), 33 per cent (58 students), 40 per cent (71 students), 18 per cent (31 students), and 2 per cent (4 students) of the students have scored ***A***, ***B***, ***C***, ***D***, and ***F*** respectively. On the surface, it looks that the study group have performed better than the control group in this test. In other words, the number of students in the study group who have scored

Group[29]	Test	number of cases	means	standrd deviatn	standrd error	F-val	2-ail rob.	Pooled Variance Estimate			Separate Variance Estimate			remark
								t-value	Deg. of freedm	2-tail prob.	t-value	Deg. of freedm	2-tail prob.	
Study	posttest	207	68.2271	15.198	1.056	1.01	.955	2.63	380	.009	2.63	369.03	.009	signif.
Control	posttest	175	64.1143	15.256	1.153									

Table 5.15 T-test for level of significance of means' difference for Freshman English 101A final exam (corpus study)

[29]The above table indicates the *t-test* for the means' difference of the study and control groups' scores in the *first semester Freshman English 101A final examination* (which was given immediately after the end of the corpus study). The items on the first row are number of students who took the test, means, standard deviations, standard errors, F-value, 2-tail prob., t-value, degrees of freedom, 2-tail prob. (the last three under pooled variance estimate), t-value, degrees of freedom, 2-tail prob. (under separate variance estimate), and lastly, the remark or *level of significance.*

C and above is more than it is in the control group. However, this has to be statistically supported in order to claim that the study group have done better than the control group.

The t-test of the means of the study and control groups (Table 5.15) provides the following summary of the scores: the means and standard deviations of the scores of the study and control groups are respectively 68.2271 and 15.19 (study), and 64.1143 and 15.256 (control). The performances of 207 and 175 students from the study and control groups have been taken into consideration. The t-test of the above means indicates that the difference between the means of the study and control groups is statistically significant at $p < 0.05$. In other words, this indicates that the study group have performed significantly better than the control group in the Freshman English 101A first semester examination. This difference could be attributed to the approach the students have used to learn English. It can be claimed that the approach used has significantly helped students in the study group to perform better than the control group in the first semester Freshman English 101A final examination. This statistical evidence is also corroborated by the views of the instructors involved in the study. However, what remains dubious about the performance in these tests is the reason why such a difference could not be found out in the other Freshman English tests mentioned above. Could this be attributed to the irregularity of the levels of difficulty in the tests or, even more significant, to the attitudes of the students towards these tests?

5.4 Teachers' reports about the 'programme'

The study underscores the indispensable role of the teacher in promoting individualized reading. Through learner training the teacher helps the learner to be able to define his/her purpose of learning and the various ways of developing fluency in reading in English for academic purposes. As indicated in section 4.2 and section 4.3 Chapter 4 above, the instructor, as an experienced learner himself, guides learners towards understanding what learning is, organizes group work and checks its effectiveness, provides appropriate help to those who need it (such as monitoring one's progress in learning) (see for instance ***str. 3.1216b, str. 3.1260, str. 3.1262a, str. 3.1267, str. 3.1288, str. 3.12, Appendix 3.12***) and aids in developing students' confidence in their learning. The present study does not

neglect the crucial role of teachers in generating learner autonomy. However, it is based on the view, as Maley (1986:89) has pointed out, that teachers cannot be taken as 'possessing sacrosanct knowledge, which they dispense in daily doses to their docile flock.'

The instructors involved in the study have also pointed out certain essential aspects of their experience in the individualized reading programme. All of them state that because of their eagerness to see the outcome of the *experiment*, that is, whether it would work or not, they have taken it as their own task (not trying someone's prescriptions). One instructor claims "...I took it as my own because I was convinced that my students were benefitting a lot from the experimental study" (***ins. 3.211, Appendix 3.2***). Another factor that seems to have enhanced this involvement is the practice of "inculcating individual responsibility [for one's own learning]... as well as [giving] the opportunity for extensive reading" (***ins. 3.222, Appendix 3.2***). All the instructors mention this as an aspect of the programme that makes it interesting and rewarding. In general terms, the issues raised by the instructors can be summarized under the following themes: appropriacy and applicability of the programme, student observations, instructor's attitudinal change, and major recommendations.

5.41 Aspects of appropriacy and applicability of individualized reading

All instructors believe that the approach is suitable for bridging the gap between students' reading ability and the reading requirements of their academic courses. As one instructor states, "...reading is a skill that is developed through reading and exposure to a variety of exercises as in the study. This, I think, will help them [students] in tackling any reading task" (***ins. 3.238, Appendix 3.2***). Another instructor states that individualized reading can narrow "the gap between students' reading ability and the academic requirements because it helps students to develop their comprehension easily; increases the size of their vocabulary and equips them with better techniques of reading" (***ins. 3.218, Appendix 3.2***). While all the instructors share the view that individualized reading promotes the major objective of the service English courses, that is, "to enable students to read and understand the texts they will be required to read for the different courses at the university" (***ins.***

3.248, Appendix 3.2), they mention time as a constraining factor. In other words, as one instructor indicates,

> One difficulty was that the participants did not have time to share their experiences of the lab when they went to their usual classroom. This could have helped them to develop more interest and to feel more responsible for the lab work (*ins. 3.233, Appendix 3.2*).

However, as one instructor argues, the programme "had to fit into the unit timing (schedule)" (*ins. 3.22, Appendix 3.12*). The 'unit timing' refers to the time allowed to teach each of the selected units in the course book suggested by the co-ordinator of Freshman English course. This might indicate the attempt made by instructors to reconcile the two different approaches - that is, individualized reading and the approach used in Freshman English course book.

5.42 Student observations

The instructors involved in the study mention at least three major aspects in their observations about their students learning through individualized reading - common reading strategies before and after the study, anticipated success or even failure in learning to read in English for academic purposes through individualized reading, and their students' reactions to individualized reading. One instructor reports that

> at the beginning the students were counting words in isolation rather than reading them in sense groups. They did not know how to skim over a reading passage to extract the necessary information. They rather read all the words and sentences equally without making any discrimination based on their importance (*ins. 3.219, Appendix 3.12*).

This might sound a bit exaggerated when one looks at the student responses to the metacognitive questionnaire analyzed above (section 5.3113, Chapter 5). However, another instructor adds that, "when students read, they struggle with language bits, mainly vocabulary items rather than getting the ideas in the parts or the whole of the text which they read" (*ins. 3.239, Appendix 3.2*). One instructor feels that "towards the end of the study they [students] managed to read faster with improved comprehension" (*ins. 3.229, Appendix 3.12*).

The instructors are divided in their opinion regarding their students' attitude towards individualized reading. One states that it is difficult to determine (***ins. 3.2210, Appendix 3.2***), and another comments that

> it is difficult to say what they felt at the early stages of the study although there was no lack of interest in the lab work through out the semester. Of course, there was also the one-hour class work which raised their confidence about passing their examination (***ins. 3.2310, Appendix 3.2***).

Most of them, however, indicate observable positive changes in students' attitudes towards individualized reading, and as one instructor reports,

> at the beginning, there was some doubt in most of them, but in the end the majority enjoyed the work. I even noticed that many regretted that they were not able to continue with the experiment during semester 2 (***ins. 3.2410, Appendix 3.2***).

Another instructor points out that "at the beginning the students didn't believe at all that they were going to benefit anything out of the experiment but at the end, they were happy to see that they were benefiting a lot from the study" (***ins. 3.2112, Appendix 3.12***).

5.43 Instructors' attitudes to individualized reading in English

It would be stating an obvious paradigm to indicate that the attitudes of the *consumers* (teachers and students), among other things, determine the success or failure of a recommended approach. As indicated in section 4.1 Chapter 4 above, the current approach could only be implemented through negotiation with both teachers and students. It has been underscored that the instructors involved in the study are the ones who are willing to try new ideas and to convince their respective students to *try* or *experiment* with a different approach to learning to read in English for academic purposes.

Although one instructor reports that, owing to the limited duration of the programme, he/she feels no significant attitudinal change (***ins. 3.224, Appendix 3.2***), the rest indicate that they are now convinced that the approach used is effective in developing the ability

to read in English. Most of them express the view that the programme has the following merits:

> a) students worked on their own and progressed at their own pace. b) Students had the opportunity to see and evaluate their own progress. c) They were exposed to a variety of skills which they certainly need for their academic reading (***ins. 3.235, Appendix 3.2***).

One instructor mentions that the programme provides "more exposure to reading materials; more exercise in comprehension and speed" and takes into consideration the importance of "individual ability (background knowledge)" (***ins. 3.225, Appendix 3.2***). While two instructors express the view that "I had some fear whether my students were going to pass the examination at the beginning, but after some time it became clear to me that they were going to pass the examination" (***ins. 3.2111, Appendix 3.2***), the rest imply that "I never felt that they would not pass their exam because I felt they would really benefit from the procedure, which I think is much better than the practice we are following" (***ins. 3.2311, Appendix 3.2***).

5.44 Instructors' recommendations

Almost all the instructors report that their students in the study groups are doing better than those in the control groups. One instructor reports that "the results of the students who were in the study group were extremely higher than those who were in the control group" (***ins. 3.2114, Appendix 3.2***). Another states that "... the results of the study group proved to be more clustered and even better than the control group" (***ins. 3.2214, Appendix 3.2***, see section 5.323 above for comparison).

Generally, the instructors recommend that the procedures of individualized reading should be introduced to the general staff, and means of integrating individualized reading in English for academic purposes into the current service English course should be sought. One instructor expresses that

> I believe, it would be useful if a seminar can be organized to brief our teaching staff about the usefulness of the methodology applied during the study. The participant instructors can take part in the discussion. This could lead to the

application of the methodology in the Department eventually (***ins. 3.2115, Appendix 3.2***).

Similarly, one of the instructors reports that "the methodology has much to offer for our students. Only ways of integrating it into the existing system should be sought" (***ins. 3.2314, Appendix 3.2***).

5.5 Conclusion

The fundamental motive for suggesting a possible approach to learning to read in English for academic purposes at the first year level of the College of Social Sciences, Addis Ababa University, is to bridge the gap between students' reading ability level and the readability of their course books. The situation at the first year level is similar to the one described by Elley (1984:285) about students in the University of the South Pacific, Fiji:

> By the time they reach university, the surviving students are still struggling with what must be largely meaningless English prose in their texts and reading assignments. By their own admission, many students are out of their depth in coping with English as a second language.

Research confirms that most of the first year students in the College of Social Sciences find it difficult to cope with the linguistic and reading demands of their courses. This seriously affects their academic performance (section 2.6 Chapter 2). The crux of this problem lies in the students' lack of appropriate background knowledge (both schematic and systemic) to operate effectively as university students. As indicated above, the prerequisites for effective reading are the knowledge of the world, the reading process and the English language (Smith 1982). Ostensibly, a deficiency in one of these may impair reading comprehension. Research in second or foreign language reading suggests that one way of tackling this problem is defining it in its right perspective, that is, determining whether it is a linguistic or a reading problem (Alderson 1984), so that appropriate techniques could be developed to help students tackle either problem. The other assumption is appropriate techniques could be devised to tackle both and one should not be separated from the other though at the lower levels reading is parasitic onlinguistic knowledge (Swaffar and others 1990). The current study is based on the assumption that,

at least at the tertiary level, the bulk of the work of the students is reading their academic course books in English. As a result of this, it is essential to design and try a possible approach to developing the students' reading ability in English for academic purposes. As has been pointed out above individualised reading in English for academic purposes as an approach is in line with the major educational objectives of the university; that is, it promotes independent learning and learning through discovery (section 2.7 Chapter 2). By individualizing reading instruction, it is assumed that major learning problems due to learner differences could be effectively be addressed. Learners could exploit their prior knowledge, however deficient it might be, develop it not only to bridge the gap between their reading ability and the readability of their course books, but also to operate as university students. Moreover, it is assumed that learners would learn effectively if they get the proper training to take the responsibility for their learning (Dickinson 1987).

Based on these assumptions, the possible approach to learning to read in English for academic purposes is designed as specified in section 4.2 and section 4.3 Chapter 4. It is indicated in the preceding chapter that the study of the effectiveness of the approach is based on two stages: the pilot and the corpus. Each stage has taken a semester - mainly from February to June (1990) and from September to January (1990 - 1991) respectively. This chapter has provided the analysis of the results of the study.

It has been indicated above (section 5.21) that the students in the pilot study have found the ***ELSIP*** materials interesting and useful. In general terms, they state that the graded materials are easy to read and they are useful in providing the appropriate reading experience. Moreover, they report that the approach employed to learn to read in English is helpful and commendable. The investigation of the common reading strategies employed by the students indicates that most of them take notes, such as new vocabulary items, while reading. They say that they look for general ideas when they read. However, the results of the survey of the students' reports about their preferred reading strategies are inconclusive.

The results of the reading comprehension tests indicate that at the beginning of the experiment, the study and control groups have similar levels of reading ability. At the

end of the study, it is established that the students have not made a significant improvement in their reading ability. In fact, it is indicated that both groups have performed lower in the post test than in the pretest. It seems that the difference in approach has not resulted in a difference in reading performance.

As summarized in section 5.222 above, the comparison of the results of the readability pretests and post tests of the study group portrays that the students have significantly achieved lower in the post test than in the pretest in history, philosophy and economics. Their performance in geography remains relatively the same. However, it is indicated that most students in the two groups are in the *frustrational* level in geography. Apparently, there is no conclusive evidence from the readability test results to assert that the students in the study group have been helped substantially by the approach employed to enhance their reading ability in English so that they could read their academic course books as efficiently as desirable. What this study found as dubious is the effectiveness of the cloze procedure as a tool in measuring the improvement students have made in their reading. It seems illogical to find out that the scores for the cloze post test are relatively lower than those for the pretest. Could it be assumed that the students have lost what they had at the beginning at the end of the study? Admittedly, their performance in the cloze tests could be affected by their attitudes towards the relevance of these tests to their academic study, and possibly due to the constraints of the cloze procedure itself (section 3.2221 Chapter 3).

The students in the pilot study have also taken general English language ability tests. As indicated in section 5.223 above, the test consists of Freshman English 101A and Freshman English 101B. The pretest and post test results of Freshman English 101A depict that although there is no significant difference between the means of the study and control groups in the post test, it has been found out while the control group have not improved in the post test, the study group have significantly performed better in the post test than in the pretest of the Freshman English 101A. This may be attributed to the effectiveness of the approach used with the study group. The results of the Freshman English 101B of the two groups indicate that both of them have performed better in the post test than in the pretest. However, it is calculated that there is no significant

difference between the means of the two groups in the Freshman English 101B post test. Hence, there is no statistical evidence to assert that during the pilot study individualized reading for English for academic purposes have helped the study group to perform better than the control group in Freshman English 101B test. The results in the post test, however, indicate significant progress of the study group.

The main study conducted in the first semester of the academic year 1990-91 involves a maximum of 420 students and more than six instructors. As indicated in section 5.3 above, missing cases - those students who have not taken a particular test for various reasons - have been excluded from the computations. This is why the numbers of students (cases) vary from one test to another. In other words, the maximum number of students taking a particular test is 210 in each group. However, as it has been indicated above, this figure has gone as low as 125 in the control group.

Like in the pilot study, the students in the main study report that they have found the *SRA* materials relevant to the learning of the service English language and other academic courses. A few mention the exercises in the materials are very helpful in developing one's reading ability. Despite the fact that some are apprehensive, because of the fact that they are not made to use the service English course book, most admit that the approach has helped them to improve in their reading skill, speed and vocabulary. In fact, they state that they have learned effective methods of tackling reading comprehension questions.

It has been mentioned above (section 5.4) that the instructors involved in the trailing of the proposed approach to reading instruction have reported that the approach is both feasible and effective. They say that they have taken the task as their own and they could see the virtues and flaws of the approach. They share the view that the approach can help in bridging the gap between students' reading ability and the readability of their course books. The instructors confirm that their students have improved in their reading skills and speed significantly since the beginning of the study. They also report that they have assumed positive attitudinal changes towards the approach. They assert that their students in the study group have performed better than their students in the control group. Of

course, this has to be corroborated by the results of the tests on reading comprehension, readability and general English language ability.

Besides this, the effectiveness of the approach to reading instruction has been appraised by capitalizing on the following three aspects of reading for academic purposes: investigating the effectiveness of the approach in helping students adopt effective reading strategies (assessed by using a metacognitive questionnaire), measuring the general improvement in reading comprehension (reading comprehension tests), finding out whether the readability levels of the course books have decreased significantly - thus confirming that the alleged gap has been bridged (cloze tests), and investigating the general linguistic improvement (Freshman English 101A and Freshman English 101B).

In general terms, the questionnaire (administered at the beginning and end of the study), reveals that most students have become more cautious in their responses to the statements. In other words, at the beginning of the study, the responses of students are relatively positive to all items. At the end of the study, the students become more selective as is indicated by the distribution of the number of responses among the five levels of agreement. The numbers do not pile up on a single level for all items. As summarized in section 5.3113, it can be assumed that there is a change of attitude towards the reading process, and students seem to favour reading strategies such as *focusing on the difference between main points and supporting details*, *continuing reading and hope for clarification later on* (when faced with some reading difficulty), *using background knowledge* and *details of content.* They also indicate that they can become effective readers if they read intensively and extensively.

The reading comprehension test results indicate that at the end of the study, the study group have significantly improved their reading comprehension ability. They have performed better than the control group in the reading comprehension post test. This significant improvement is suggested as attributable to the approach used in the study group. However, the readability test results are not as conclusive as the former. Though there is an improvement in the results of the study group in the geography cloze post test, the control group exhibit similar improvement. Similarly, the performance in the history

cloze test, although the study group perform better than the control group, the difference cannot be statistically proved to be significant. It is pointed out that the control group have performed lower in the history cloze post test than in the pretest.

The last parameter used to assess the effectiveness of the approach is the Freshman English 101A and Freshman English 101B test package. This package has been employed to investigate any linguistic improvement made by the study group since the beginning of the study. In the Freshman English 101A, although both groups have been proved to have shown an improvement in their linguistic ability, it seems that there is no significant difference in performance between the study and control groups. Similarly, in the Freshman English 101B test, it cannot be proved that the study group have performed better than the control group, though, as indicated above for Freshman English 101A, the two groups have significantly improved at the end of the study. Lastly, the official Freshman English 101A final examination results are taken to determine the effectiveness of the approach. The analysis of the results of both groups indicates that the study group have performed significantly better than the control group in this examination. This may be attributed to the effectiveness of the approach employed by the study group. In a nut-shell, the approach has been accepted by the teachers and students alike involved to be feasible and effective in generating positive attitudes towards and establishing appropriate learning strategies to learning to read in English for academic purposes. It has also helped students to improve their reading and linguistic abilities. But it seems that the alleged *gap* cannot be bridged by only a semester's work with this approach. More time might be needed to compile data that can be statistically established as indicating major changes in students' schematic and systemic knowledge that can help bridge the gap between their reading ability and the readability levels of their course books.

CHAPTER SIX

Conclusions

6.1 Summary

The major objective of the service English courses in Addis Ababa University is to help students improve their linguistic ability so that they could efficiently pursue their academic courses in English. Though it is not explicitly underlined, it is believed that the courses are intended (a) to be remedial in nature, that is, to help learners revise the knowledge of the English language they are believed to have learnt at school(Jarvis 1969; Conroy 1985), (b) to give advanced language work appropriate for higher education, and (c) to equip learners with language skills, such as, summarizing, note-taking, and report writing. In short, the service English courses at the university are meant to bridge the gap between the students' prior knowledge and the academic requirements of the university. According to the present syllabus of the courses, the 'critical mass of knowledge' necessary to bridge this gap has been qualified as follows: firstly, the grammar of the English language, and as such, a brief glossary of selected aspects of usage; secondly, a few reading passages that are very long with exercises that may not help students to develop desirable reading skills and strategies; and lastly, few writing exercises that are mostly unrelated to what the students are supposed to do in their academic courses. Recent findings indicate that the service English courses at the university fall short of providing students with the essential mass of knowledge to enable them to be effective listeners and readers in English for academic purposes (to mention a few, Gebremedhin 1988; Haile Michael 1988; Hicks 1989) and, unfortunately, they tend to become a waste of manpower and resources (Mosback 1977).

There could be several reasons for the ineffectiveness of the service English courses. One of the most important, as indicated above, is the way the 'critical mass of knowledge' is defined and attempted to be taught. The qualification of this knowledge is not based on a disciplined assessment of the current students' prior knowledge or background

knowledge and the required knowledge to pursue higher education in the university, but on a former structuralist view of language teaching (see Madsen 1976, Jarvis 1969, Asfaw and Murrison-Bowie 1976) which stipulates that the teaching of usage (language descriptions or structural items) is essential for the mastery or learning of the language. The common assumption is that if learners master the structure of the language, they would be able to use their knowledge of the language to effectively communicate with it.

As indicated in section 2.3 Chapter 2, English language teachers recommended the teaching of the spoken rather than the written language to be given the priority, because, they felt that this was similar to the natural way of learning a language - first spoken and then written as children would learn their first language (Tesfaye and Taylor 1976). Thus, the teaching of reading in English for academic purposes was not given the proper emphasis. The state of the teaching of English in the Ethiopian schools has deteriorated since the late sixties and seventies (Stoddart 1986; McNab 1989), not only due to the controversial theoretical constructs informing the teaching of English as a foreign language in the country, but also due to the fact that since the imported western educational system could not bring about the much needed socio-cultural and economic development, the government was unable to increase its expenditure in education to cope with the expanding student population. In fact some researchers claim that the educational expenditure in Ethiopia is the lowest in East Africa and has kept on declining despite increased demands for schooling (Eshetu 1991). Major recommendations for educational reform could not be executed due to lack of finance and government commitment (Last 1983; Rogers 1967).

As McNab (1989) and Stoddart (1986) have stated, the government schools could only provide a half-day schooling, poor library facilities, little or no on job training for teachers, large classes, and in general no incentives that promote positive growth of the educational system. Apparently, this in turn has constrained the quality of the teaching of English in schools. Some would like to state that the English-medium schooling has contributed to the decline in the quality of education in countries like Ethiopia (Abbott 1989). However, it is contended here that there are far more significant factors, than the medium, that have constrained the educational system. The change from English-medium

schooling to,say, Amharic-medium schooling (as Stoddart 1986 suggested, and shared by many others such as Rogers 1989) may not necessarily bring about a drastic change in the quality of education.

It is noted that the Ethiopian educational system is highly centralized (McNab 1989; British Council 1986) and it has been mainly used to promote the centralization of political power and the training of skilled manpower for modern bureaucracy (Markakis 1974). Hence, the government has become almost the only major employer of school graduates, and the educational system has remained geared towards meeting this need (Gilkis 1975). As mentioned above, despite the various recommendations to reorient the educational system to serve basic societal needs (such as the recommendation to harmonize theory with practice in the teaching and learning process, the decentralization of the educational system, the use of local languages in primary education and other recommendations, such as those of the Education Sector Review mentioned in section 2.3 Chapter 2), socio-political exigencies have hindered their execution (Last 1983). In other words, much has not been done to relate the educational system to the socio-cultural and economic problems of the population.

Some researchers claim the pre-1974 educational system, in particular, because of the fact that it was imported and reflected Western social values, has resulted in some sort of alienation - the youth have become neither Ethiopian nor Western. The educated have been alienated from the Ethiopian tradition because of the imported educational system (Teshome, 1990; Girma 1992). Whether this claim can be sustained or not is not the major issue of the current study; however, it is essential to note here that the educational system has not addressed the fundamental socio-cultural and linguistic diversities that characterize the country. Thus, the issue of the relevance of the educational system to the basic needs of the country could be raised here. It might be argued that students do not find the educational system meaningful, and as a result, they may not be as motivated as desired to progress in their learning. As mentioned above, the other factor worth mentioning is because political exigencies have drained most of the country's resources, the expenditure on education has gradually decreased. This has resulted in poor quality of teaching, half-day schooling for most children, large classes with few or no text books,

poor school facilities and the like (Last 1983; section 2.3 Chapter 2; McNab 1989). It can be expected that the language classes are the most affected in this situation. McNab (1989) and Stoddart (1986) indicate that it has become almost impossible to teach subjects in English in the secondary schools; most resort to using Amharic. Hence this has seriously constrained the educational system to provide each learner with appropriate learning experience.

It is with such educational background and knowledge of the English language that students from the secondary schools, after having taken the ESLCE[1] and earned the required G.P.A.[2], join the Addis Ababa University. The service English courses are planned to help these students mainly to make up for their linguistic deficiencies. However, current research indicates that the service English courses are not as effective as they could be in helping students to acquire the 'critical mass of knowledge' necessary for enabling students to operate as university students (section 2.6 Chapter 2). It might not be contentious to add that the service English courses, as the most important courses that all Addis Ababa University first year entrants are required to take, should be designed in such a way that they do not only facilitate the learning of English but they also reorient students to learn how to learn - not only English, but also their other academic courses, thus creating a link between the learning of the language and the pursuit of their other the academic courses. It is argued that the service English courses could accomplish the following:

> Firstly, they could help students to make up for their linguistic deficiencies, not necessarily by qualifying these deficiencies for the students, but by training students to learn to identify their deficiencies by themselves and make up for them in a way each individual student is capable of doing, thus giving more prominence to individualised instruction and facilitating independent learning. The provision

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[1]Recently, most people involved in the conducting of this national examination have complained about the difficult task of checking cheating which is rampant in several examination centres.

[2]grade point average in five subjects. That is, currently, the letter grades for English and mathematics, subjects that a candidate has to pass in order to apply for higher education, and three other subjects that the student has managed to get better passing letter grades (C and above) than the rest, will be added up and divided by the number of subjects (that is, five) to give the grade point average of the scores.

of favourable learning opportunities would enable students to do away with ineffective learning strategies (such as overdependence on teachers) they acquired in their pre-university education, and learn appropriate ones. Higher education requires the learner to engage in independent work, and thus language classes can create a situation whereby the learner

> either alone or in a group decides *what* it is he [sic] wants to learn in the light of *why* he [sic] needs to learn, and then decides *how* he [sic] is going to tackle the problem. He [sic] may even use his [sic] own 'learning materials' to work upon in the form of authentic texts, and he [sic] will certainly choose his [sic] own course book if he [sic] has one. He [sic] takes the responsibility for learning upon himself [sic], and while he [sic] learns how to learn (or how not to !) (Geddes and Sturtridge 1982:2).

Apparently, the task of the teacher is to seek an approach that sets this process in motion. It is argued that a student can be claimed to have the knowledge of something if he/she is able to formulate experience in reference to given categories, and he/she achieves this through learning or engaging in the process of such formulation (Widdowson 1990:5). This engagement cannot solely be fostered by a rigid teaching methodology. Flexible teaching aims at enhancing the process of engagement. It is claimed that the language teacher has the responsibility to foster autonomy. One way of doing this is through learner training. Learner training is conceived as sets of "procedures or activities which raise learners' awareness of what is involved in the process of learning a second language, which encourage learners to become more involved in and responsible for their own learning, and which help learners to develop and strengthen their strategies for language learning" (*ELT Journal* 1993:92).

Secondly,the service English courses could become more effective and meaningful if the teaching and learning process could allow for individual differences in the use of prior knowledge, learning style and strategies, learning purpose and motivation. Researchers confirm that learners "bring with them their whole experience of learning and of life, along with their own reasons for being there, and their own particular needs that they hope to see satisfied" (Allwright and

Bailey 1991:18). Needless to say, this mass of prior knowledge differs from individual to individual. As Dickinson (1987) points out, learners also indicate differences in cognitive style (the overall approach to learning), cognitive strategy (learners' approach to specific types of task), and learning strategy (the actual activities and techniques which lead to learning), and, not to say the least, the differences in experiences due to the socio-cultural and linguistic background discussed in section 2.2 Chapter 2 above). Researchers in the psychology of learning confirm that learners can be typed according to their cognitive styles and strategies. Wilson (1981) identifies field-dependents (those who prefer a step by step approach or structured materials for learning) and field-independents (those who favour more global learning activities). Entwistle (1981) has found out that some learners prefer holistic learning (focusing on broad relations and forming hypotheses about generalizations) and others favour serialist learning (focusing on narrower relations and forming specific hypotheses). Similarly, Wilson (1981) claims that some learners are syllabus-bound (those that prefer to learn only those items they are required to learn - which has explicitly been indicated in the responses of the students discussed in section 5.21 and section 5.31 Chapter 5 above; ***Appendix 3.11*** and ***Appendix 3.12***) and syllabus-free (those that prefer to be involved in following up their own ideas and view the syllabus as restrictive). Elsewhere, it has been indicated that one major problem in conducting the study was convincing those concerned that the approach recommended did not exclude the official syllabus. The rationale for the approach is "any group of learners will manifest several differences in the preferred ways of going about learning tasks, and that learning is unlikely to be most efficient if the learner is prevented from learning in the ways she prefers" (Dickinson 1987:22-23). This calls for the adoption of a flexible approach in teaching and the provision of materials that allow learners to learn the way they prefer the most.

Thirdly, the service English courses could provide as much learning opportunities as possible if they do not limit students to the official course books (and specially, when it comes to the reading instruction part). Eskey and Grabe (1988) and Nuttal (1982) have indicated that students learn to read by reading, not by

extensive explanations about reading. In other words, the quantity and quality of reading is crucial for success in second or foreign language reading.

As indicated above, the service English courses are mainly designed to teach the structure of the English language (Conroy 1985). Current research cited above (section 2.6 Chapter 2) confirms that the courses have not been effective in providing first year university entrants with the essential mass of knowledge (which includes appropriate learning strategies) required for the pursuit of higher education.

It has been emphasised that an area of special interest in the service English courses is reading in English for academic purposes. In fact, one fundamental purpose of the service English courses is to enable students to read in English for academic purposes as efficiently as they could. It has been indicated above that the service English courses do not pay much attention to help learners read their academic courses in English. Despite the fact that researchers in second language reading emphasise the cardinal role reading plays in higher education in English medium universities (Carrell 1988a), the service English courses in the university do not provide students with adequate exposure to reading that encourages learners to learn to read in a way they prefer according to their needs, wants and lacks, and become self-directed (Geddes and Sturtridge 1982).

One of the most researched area in applied linguistics is reading in a second or foreign language for academic purposes. As indicated in section 3.2 above, research in reading followed two major trends: the study of theoretical constructs that underpin the process of reading and learning to read in a first language, and the investigation of the process of second or foreign language reading and reading instruction in a second or foreign language. One of the most influential views on L1 reading is Goodman's. Goodman (1988:11) states that "my effort has been to create a model of the reading process powerful enough to explain and predict reading behaviour and sound enough to be a base on which to build and examine the effectiveness of the reading instruction." Goodman's (1976) and Smith's (1982) theory of the L1 reading process, characterised as the top-down or concept driven model of reading, in general terms, stipulates that reading is a psycholinguistic guessing game whereby the reader is engaged in making predictions and

confirming these by utilizing as little as possible clues from the given text. In other words, "we sample the text as necessary to confirm hypotheses" (Grabe 1988:57). Despite the fact that attempts were made to translate Goodman's theory of reading to reading instruction specially in ESL situations, some researchers argued that his theory lacked explicitness. As Eskey (1988:93) points out, the top-down models

> tend to emphasize such higher-level skills as the prediction of meaning by means of context clues or certain kinds of background knowledge at the expense of such lower-level skills as the rapid and accurate identification of lexical and grammatical forms. That is, in making the perfectly valid point that fluent reading is primarily a cognitive process, they tend to *de*emphasize the perceptual and decoding dimensions of that process. The model they promote is an accurate model of the skilful, fluent reader, for whom perception and decoding have become automatic, but for the less proficient, developing reader - like most second language readers[3] this model does not provide a true picture of the problems such readers must surmount.

Grabe (1991) states that there are at least two major research approaches to reading. The first approach refers to those studies that investigate the different component skills of reading. These studies in reading investigate automatic recognition skills, vocabulary and structural knowledge, formal discourse structure knowledge, content/world background knowledge, synthesis and evaluation skills/strategies, and metacognitive knowledge and skills monitoring. Each domain is a useful approach to the study of the reading process "to the extent that such an approach leads to important insights into the reading process" (Grabe 1991:382). The second approach interprets the reading process "by means of simple controlling metaphors" (Grabe 1991:383) - the bottom-up (emphasis on textual decoding), top-down (emphasis on reader interpretation and prior knowledge), and interacting processing. It has been shown that current research confirms that reading is an interactive process

> whereby low-level 'bottom-up' processes involving the physical text on the page, such as letter and word recognition, interact with higher-level 'top-down' processes such as prior knowledge of text-type, or topic. [This approach also confirms that] deficiencies at one level may be compensated for by proficiencies at another (Moran and Williams 1993:65).

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[3]It is also believed that the models do not describe reading in EFL situations.

Based on these theoretical stipulations, the current study is designed to explore the effectiveness of individualised reading in English for academic purposes as a possible approach to reading instruction at the first year level of the College of Social Science, Addis Ababa University. It is argued that first year students could develop their reading ability in English to help them cope with their academic studies if the reading instruction is designed in such a way that it (a) provides them with the 'critical mass of knowledge' (the essential systemic and schematic knowledge) and (b) allows each individual learner to learn how to learn, and encourages him/her to be self-directed in learning to read in English for academic purposes by helping him/her identify his/her needs and lacks.

Accordingly, an experiment[4] was conducted in order to investigate the effectiveness and accessibility of individualised reading as a possible approach to reading instruction in the service English courses in the university. The study was carried out in two stages: the pilot (in the second semester of the 1989-90 academic year), and the main (in the first semester of the 1990-91 academic year). Originally it was planned that while the pilot study would be limited to a semester, the main study was to be carried out in two semesters. The students from the social science first year level were selected and grouped into control and study (based on whether or not the particular section's Freshman English schedule does not clash with the Spoken English schedule, and whether or not the concerned instructor is willing to be involved in the study). The control group followed the conventional approach, that is, the instructors explained the linguistic items to be studied and practised and the students' major task was to follow the lectures (mainly on structural items) and do the exercises. This pattern was followed for three periods per week (or three hours per week). The study group used the following mode of study. The mode of study in the individualised reading scheme consisted of (a) two hours per week of individualised reading, and (b) one hour per week of group discussion. The individualised reading sessions fostered a situation whereby students selected (were helped

[4]I prefer to use *study* in place of *experiment* since, I think, the latter is associated with explicit behavioural predispositions that are more or less the *product* of the process rather than the *process* itself. Moreover, experimentation seems to be connected with the school of behaviourism that sees an overt link between stimulus and response.

to select) reading materials[5] (graded readers from the ***ELSIP*** - in the pilot; and reading cards from the ***SRA*** package - in the main study), read and assessed their performances (either in a form supplied by the teacher, as was done with the ***ELSIP***; or in the student's ***SRA*** workbook). Most of the work was left to the students,and instructors kept in touch with what each student was doing in each session by appraising each student's report indicated in his/her workbook. Most of the learner training activities were drawn from these sources. The group discussion sessions were mainly meant for learner training activities, sharing of learning experiences, and doing the structure and usage exercises in the English text book. The learning activities were also planned and handled by students, but when necessary, instructors, who often joined one group or another during the discussions, helped students in the planning of the time-table for the work.

This mode of learning was hypothesized to bring about a significant improvement in students' reading and linguistic ability. It was assumed that this improvement in reading ability would be indicated in performances in reading comprehension tests, cloze readability tests, and Freshman English tests. It would also manifest itself in positive changes in responses to a questionnaire on the reading process and reading strategies.

6.11 The pilot study

During the pilot study most students approved of the recommended approach and reported that the approach was the best way for them to improve both their reading and linguistic ability. They stated that they liked the ***ELSIP*** reading collection because, according to the students, they contained interesting stories which were written in clear language.

However, the comparison between the reading comprehension pretest and post test results of the pilot study group (and when compared with those of the pilot control group) indicated that there was no significant improvement in the reading ability of the students.

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[5]Individualised reading of learner selected materials is emphasised and this subsumes the extensive reading of texts available. Such a process may not be appropriately labelled as extensive reading since this may imply that it is the quantity of the materials rather than the active involvement of the learner reader that would facilitate fluency in reading. Both intensive and extensive reading could co-exist and could be employed by the learner reader if he/she feels that this satisfies his/her needs, lacks and wants.

The cloze readability tests, drawn from all the students course books (except from the course book for Quantitative methods), which were administered at the beginning and end of the pilot study, did not show any marked difference in the readability levels of the course books. It is doubted whether or not the cloze procedure employed was the appropriate tool for assessing the readability levels of the course books.

The Freshman English 101A pretest and post test results of the pilot study group indicated that the pretest results were better than the post test results (means: pretest 40.59; post test 36.84). A similar result was indicated for the pilot control group (means: 36.80 and 34.50). The Freshman English 101B pretest and post test results of the pilot study group (means: 32.86 and 34.91) showed that the group had significantly improved in Freshman English 101B post test. However, a similar improvement was recorded for the pilot control group. Apparently, such results were attributed to (a) students' attitudes towards the relevance of taking the tests, and possibly to (b) the irregularity in the levels of difficulty in the tests, and (c) their degree of appropriateness for assessing improvements that could be gained through independent work. The cloze tests were the least appropriate in indicating the differences in levels of ability.

6.12 The main study

It was pointed out that the main study involved more than two-third of the total students in the social science first year level. About 210 students were assigned to the study group, and about the same number were considered in the control group. Like in the pilot study, the students in the main study group confirmed the accessibility of the recommended approach, and they reported that the reading materials (the ***SRA*** reading cards) helped them to improve their ability in reading comprehension and speed, and developed their vocabulary knowledge. In fact, some reported that they had changed their attitudes towards reading, and doing reading comprehension tests in examinations. They also stated that the mode of study did not only help them to study Freshman English but it also helped them significantly to study their other academic courses.

The questionnaire on the reading process and reading strategies administered at the

beginning and end of the study revealed that students' knowledge of the reading process and their use of appropriate reading strategies was not clearly marked. In both sessions, at the beginning of the study and at the end of the study, they reported that they had confidence in their ability to *recognise the main points from supporting details*. The preferred reading repair strategies were to *continue reading and hope for further clarification*, and *going back to a point before the problematic part and reread from there*. They indicated that their preferred effective reading strategies were *focusing on details of content* and *employing background knowledge*. Most students conceived that *recognising words* was their source of reading difficulty. At the beginning of the study, the best reader was identified as one who *understood the overall meaning of a text* and one who *focused on details of content*. At the end of the study, the best reader was conceived as one who had *a grasp of the organisation of a text*, who *used prior knowledge effectively*, and who *recognises words*. At the beginning of the study, most students felt that by *improving pronunciation* and *learning words* they could become fluent readers. At the end of the study, they stated that they could become fluent readers by *reading intensively and extensively*, and by *learning words*.

The reading comprehension pretests and post tests were drawn from the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate *First Certificate in English*. The t-test for the level of significance in the difference between the means of the scores of the study group in the reading comprehension pretest and post test indicated that the two means were different at $p < 0.05$. It was found out that the post test mean was significantly higher than the pretest mean of the scores of the study group. In other words, the study group, performed significantly better in the post test than in the pretest. Similarly, the study group performed significantly better than the control group in the reading comprehension post test. This finding indicated that the students who followed the recommended approach had significantly improved in their reading comprehension ability in relation to the performance of the control group on the same test, and in relation to their initial and terminal performance on the reading comprehension test. However, the results in the cloze tests were found to be inconclusive. Most students were found to be in the *frustrational* level for geography and history course books, although the latter seemed to be relatively easier than the former for the students.

The language tests were selected from old Freshman English 101A and Freshman English 101B examination papers. Though it was found out that both groups improved in their linguistic ability at the end of the study, no significant difference in performances could be established between the two groups. Both showed significant improvements at the end of the study. It is doubted whether or not (a) students saw any relevance in taking the two sets of tests, and (b) the levels of difficulty between the pair of tests (pretest and post test Freshman English 101A, or Freshman English 101B) were similar.

However, it was found out that there was a significant difference between the means of scores of the study group and the control group in the first semester official Freshman English 101A examination. The study group performed significantly better than the control group in this test. It was concluded that the approach used with the study group helped the students to score better grades than the students in the control group.

6.2 Recommendations

It has been indicated that the students in the study group have significantly improved in their reading comprehension ability[6]. They have also scored better grades in the official Freshman English 101A first semester final examination (1990-91 academic year). However, it is indicated that the results of the questionnaire and the other tests, including the cloze tests that did not seem to be appropriate tools for assessing independent work, are inconclusive. This could be, among other things, due to the nature of the tests or the students' attitudes towards these tests, or possibly, due to the fact that the tests indicate the product rather than the process. Based on the results of the study, the following issues could be raised for further research.

> ***6.21*** Reliable responses could be compiled from a questionnaire, such as the one used in this study, by devising it in such a way that students' responses could be studied through continuous observation. Moreover, as Allwright and Bailey

[6]This conclusion has been arrived at by comparing the students' scores on the reading comprehension pretest and post test, and by comparing the reading comprehension post test results of the study group and the control group.

(1991) and Candlin (1984:xiii) state, the questionnaire can be improved by "looking at the triangulation procedures in sociological method to see how we can make our reader accounts as rich and as warranted as possible." Such an approach would focus on the process rather than the product of reading.

6.22 The cloze tests have proved to be the least indicative tools. It has been shown that the cloze tests could not indicate any change in the levels of the reading ability of the students. Further investigation about the validity and reliability of the cloze procedure could be of some relevance to ascertain its relevance to establishing the readability levels of texts.

6.23 The language tests, despite the indicated improvements, could not show the progress the study group have made in linguistic knowledge. They seem to be not effective tools for assessing the gains of independent work. These tests, besides their other deficiencies (Teshome 1992), emphasise product rather than process (while individualised learning is process-orientated). Other appropriate tools could be employed to study the gains of independent learning.

6.24 It is believed that the change from teacher-directed to learner directed learning could not be achieved smoothly and within a short period of time. Significant results could have been compiled if the study had continued for more than a semester. Obviously, developing background knowledge in order to improve reading ability, and developing reading ability in order to improve background knowledge requires time, and learner interest and motivation.

6.25 The responses of the instructors and students strongly indicate positive results although most of the test results do not corroborate this. This disparity could be due to the research model employed. It is to be noted that the study was initiated in early 1989 with its emphasis on assessing product rather than observing the process of individualised reading. It is recommended that the effects of individualised reading or the process of independent learning could be studied by using a research paradigm that capitalises on the process rather than the product, although it is not implied that assessing product does not have any use at all. Developing reading ability is more of a process than a product, and test results may not depict the whole truth about the process.

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Appendix 1 Baseline Study

Appendix 1.1 Reading Texts for Baseline Study
1.11 Reading Text for History

Read the following text and take short notes

French Legal Policies

The Algerian Berbers suffered also in matters of justice. The original aim of the French was to uproot the Berber past and replace it with French ideas and machinery of justice. The French idea was that French institutions were not only just - absolutely just - but were also universally applicable. French justice was beyond question and good everywhere and therefore any Berber form was simply an obstacle to be brushed aside in order that the supposedly backward Berbers could better experience the freedom and equity of the French forms. Therefore the Muslim *quadis* and their tribunals were suspended and the Code Napoleon introduced for both civil and criminal cases. Later the native penal law the *(the code de loi Indigenat)* was promulgated and customary law continued to prevail in the Kabylie.

Clearly opposed to this French concept was the Berber-Arab viewpoint. For Muslims the *Quran* was the basis of their religion and their law; its precepts were immutable and sacred; to violate them was to assail their religion and liberty, and might result in holy war. They held the view that the law, as declared by Muhammad, was fixed and they could not accept the French contention that the law had to keep pace with the changing conditions in Europe. In their view the French were disseminating heresy. The Berbers, absolutely powerless before their masters, swallowed humilation. After the Kabylie revolt of 1871 the French attempted to clean sweep of the customs and institutions of the Berbers of Kabylie.

Politically the berbers were not taken into partnership. Administration remained under the control of the white colonists, usually hot-headed, opinionated, arrogant men but influential with the French administration, through their connections in the world of business and politic. They regarded Algeria as a mere extension of France, a view consistently endorsed by the French government until the advent of Charles de Gaulle. The Berbers were considered as backward, uncultured, ineducable and almost irredeemable, and were consequently excluded from the administration of the country. They did not qualify for French citizenship, the only citizenship recognized in Algeria, though in 188870 the Jews were naturalized *en masse*. Jules Ferry, a French prime minister, said of the indigenous Algerians in 1892: 'The moslems have no notion of the political mandate or of limited and contractual authority; they know nothing of a representative *regime* or of the separation of powers, but they have in the highest degree the instinct and need and ideal of a strong power and just power.'

The Algerian Berbers' reaction to the repressive policy of the French task masters was one of sullen resignation to their fate. Their past was being uprooted, their present

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Individualized Reading for EAP for social science first year student in Addis Ababa University: a study of a possible Approach for teaching Reading in EFL.

Gebremedhin Simeon

1993

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Abstract

The three-semester service English courses offered by the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature, Institute of Language Studies, are meant to help all Addis Ababa University students develop their linguistic abilities so that they could successfully cope with the academic requirements of the university. The first two courses are offered in the first year and the third course in the first or second semester of the second year. Research indicates the first year courses in particular have not succeeded in helping the social science students develop their background knowledge to a significant degree to read in English for academic purposes.

Based on the current view that reading is an interactive process and that this may be facilitated if learners can develop the critical mass of knowledge which embodies knowledge of the content (or of the world), knowledge of the reading process and knowledge of English and the capacity to effectively use this competence, the current study explores the feasibility of a possible approach for reading instruction in English for academic purposes to enable students to acquire the essential mass of knowledge so that they could become fluent readers in English. The approach maintains that effective learning for attaining the essential background knowledge for developing the learner's ability to read fluently can occur when learning is individualised (to cater for learner differences in cognitive style and strategies, learning strategies, motivation and purpose of learning, and prior knowledge) and when learners get the training on learning how to learn and to take the responsibility for their learning.

Accordingly, an independent learning mode was designed in order to encourage learners to take most of the learning decisions by themselves: two sessions per week of individualised reading whereby learners selected appropriate reading materials from the ***ELSIP*** and ***SRA*** collections and were encouraged to read and focus on what each individual learner felt was his/her needs, lacks and wants; and one session per week of group discussion whereby learners shared experiences and discussed the structure and usage exercises in the Freshman English course books and were provided with some

training on learning how to learn. The study was undertaken in two phases: the pilot planned to last for a semester and the corpus for two semesters. While the pilot study involved about 120 social science first year students (or four sections: two sections were study and two sections were control), the main study included about 420 social science first year students (or thirteen sections: six sections consisting of 210 students assigned to the study group, and the remaining 210 students assigned to the control group). The mode of study continued for one semester, or about five months. At the beginning and end of the study, a test package and a questionnaire on the reading process and reading strategies were administered. The test package consisted of reading comprehension tests drawn from the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate, *First Certificate in English* (to assess the reading comprehension improvement of the study group), cloze readability tests set from the social science first year course books (to test whether students at the end of the study, due to the approach variable, have found their course books easier to read than before), and English language tests taken from the Freshman English 101A and Freshman English 101B examinations (to find out whether students in the study groups have improved in their linguistic ability). At the end of the study, the attitudes and opinions of the instructors involved were also solicited.

Despite the planned arrangement, unforseen circumstances limited the corpus study to one semester. Consequently, the pilot study was found to be essential for two fundamental reasons: firstly, the corpus study was limited to only a semester and, thus, this necessitated the use of the information compiled from the pilot study to validate the test results of the corpus study; and secondly, the pilot study indicated that most students preferred structured learning materials like the ***SRA*** reading cards to unstructured ones, such as the ***ELSIP*** materials, at the initial stages. Based on this, the corpus study started with the ***SRA*** and would have moved into the ***ELSIP*** if the study had not been discontinued at the beginning of the second semester of the 1990/91 academic year.

It was found out that the students during the pilot study and the main study appreciated the mode of learning and they liked the materials they used. They reported that they had benefitted substantially and the approach pursued helped them not only in studying English but also their other courses. The instructors corroborated the students' reactions

and recommended the adoption of this approach in the service English courses. However, during the pilot study, the results of the tests did not indicate any marked improvement in the reading ability of the students in the study group. During the main study, the cloze test results were inconclusive. The study group of the main study, however, performed significantly better than the control group in the reading comprehension post test. They also indicated a marked improvement in their reading comprehension ability at the end of the study. Moreover, it was statistically proved that the study group improved significantly in their linguistic ability at the end of the study, however, it was not possible to conclude whether they did better than the control group. Significant changes in reading habits and styles were not observed. However, it was found out that the study group performed significantly better than the control group in the 1990/91 academic year first semester Freshman English 101A final examination.
It was recommended that such explicit changes could have been found to be more marked than indicated by the test results (a) if the study had continued for more than a semester, and (b) if the study had given more prominence to assessing the process than the product of language learning.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Addis Ababa University employs English as a language of instruction. Almost all course books and reference materials that are available in the university are written in English. Under normal circumstances, university students are expected to have a satisfactory command of the English language in order to undertake learning tasks that involve the use of both the language and the knowledge the students get from their reading and other sources. As Wilson (1981:31) points out about the academic requirements in institutes of higher learning in the West, it is taken for granted in Addis Ababa University that "learning tasks in arts and social sciences characteristically involve elucidation of the framework of assumptions within which different writers operate: the student is asked to examine presuppositions, compare and contrast, analyze arguments and evaluate the adequacy of interpretations of behaviour or social trends."

Moreover, it is assumed that in Addis Ababa University (section 2.5 Chapter 2 below), students in the social sciences are supposed to read intensively and extensively, to take notes from their lectures and reading, to compare and contrast ideas and to assess opinions and presuppositions. In most instances, students perform such learning tasks individually. It is assumed that lecturers 'allow' students to follow their preferred styles and strategies of learning and to pursue knowledge in a way each student *wants* and *is able to*. It is also assumed that in the social sciences, lecturers indicate to their students that there may not be only one way of looking at things, and that interpretations of phenomena may change from time to time and from individual to individual. It is taken for granted that lecturers do not take themselves as the sole source of knowledge and that students are not supposed to 'take' from this knowledge *verbatim* from their classroom lectures. In fact, research based on classroom language learning lessons indicates that

"no matter how well the teacher does his or her job, what any learner can learn from each lesson will depend on what happens in the course of the classroom interaction, and on whether or not that learner bothers to pay attention to the different learning opportunities that arise" (Allwright and Bailey 1991:22). All these classroom language learning activities depend, among other things, on what each student brings to the learning situation - both the knowledge of the process and the competence to utilize this knowledge (Garner 1987; Ellis and Sinclair 1989).

It has been pointed out that English is the medium of instruction in Addis Ababa University (section 2.2 and section 2.6 Chapter 2). Service English courses were initially introduced to last a few years to help those university entrants who needed to improve their English so that they could follow their academic courses effectively (section 2.5; Jarvis 1969). Currently, it is assumed that in order for university students to operate as students of higher learning in English, Addis Ababa University students are offered a three semesters of remedial English course as "an aid to improving the students' academic efficiency in their university studies." It is admitted that the service English course books are meant to provide "a review and revision of the ground rules of English grammar" (Conroy 1985: introduction). Apparently, this statement reflects the basis of the development of the courses and the major learning objectives of Freshman English. It is assumed that if students are taught the ground rules of English grammar, they will master the language which eventually helps them to cope with their academic requirements.

Nevertheless, current research (section 2.5 and section 2.6 Chapter 2) confirms that the assumption that the current three semesters' remedial English work would enable students to effectively pursue their academic work in English is not borne out by facts. It is common knowledge that most students cannot adequately cope with the academic demands of the university. Most students are poor readers (section 2.6 Chapter 2 below) and seem not to benefit much either from the lectures or the course books of the service English courses. In fact, it is paradoxical to learn the fact that quite a number of first year students find it difficult to pass the service English courses that are meant to help the very students thought to have difficulty in learning their academic courses. It is

alleged that most first year drop outs are likely to be those who have at least an ***F*** score in Freshman English (section 2.6 Chapter 2). Similarly, students have the 'wrong' impression, possibly encouraged to assume as such by the limited classroom learning experience they have had in schools, or probably, by the entire educational system (section 2.2, section 2.3 and section 2.4 Chapter 2), that the Freshman English course books contain all what they are *expected to learn* to pass the service English courses (section 5.2 and section 5.3 Chapter 5 below; ***Appendix 3***). It is not uncommon to observe that students treat their academic course books, including the service English course books, as consisting of most of what they are *supposed to know* and not what they may *like to know* or to learn (section 5.311 Chapter 5; ***Appendix 3.12***).

Two basic assumptions could be made about this. Firstly, students' assumptions of what they are supposed to know may not necessarily be the same as what lecturers may expect their students to know (as stipulated in the educational objectives of the university - section 2.4 Chapter 2). A problem is likely to arise when students are certain that they know what they are supposed to know and act accordingly and yet fall short of what is expected of them specially regarding the level of competence in reading in English. Secondly, as it is indicated above, students may assume that what they are supposed to know in a particular course is all what is in a given course book for that course (section 5.311 Chapter 5; ***Appendix 3.12***). It seems that this is the reason why students insist on using the only prescribed text books for the Freshman English courses, and most of them seem not to bother to develop, for instance, their linguistic ability by doing extra reading in English. Though it is not denied that there are certain things that an institution expects its students to know, such as those outlined in the form of course requirements, Addis Ababa University, by virtue of its being an institution of higher learning, is established to facilitate research and disseminate appropriate knowledge (section 2.4 Chapter 2). This requires both staff and students to look for possible sources of knowledge, to investigate, compare and contrast phenomena, to examine available information from different points of view (and not necessarily the position the course book writer wants to propagate), and more significantly, to foster independent methods of inquiry.

Various factors might have contributed to the students' poor performance in English, as

indicated above. Research undertaken at different times indicates that most students have not been successful in reading in English (Lee 1968; Langmuir 1971; Gebremedhin 1991), find their course books very difficult to read (Tsegaye 1981; Mendida 1988; ***Appendix 1.2***), and their lectures very difficult to follow (Haile Michael 1988; Hicks 1989). Most lecturers complain about their students' inability to write their assignments in correct English. They believe that their students do not read as effectively and as much as they should (***Appendix 3.2***). Despite the fact that the service English courses were introduced "to improve the students' skills in following textbooks and lectures in other subjects and to encourage thoughtful and logical expression in their second language[1]" (Mosback 1977:314) current findings indicate "that general 'backup' courses in service English are largely a waste of resources" (318).

Two points could be raised to put the issue in its right perspective. Firstly, it should be decided whether it is still necessary to keep the service English courses in the university. If it is decided that they should stay, then other ELT related questions, (such as developing appropriate course materials, selecting suitable approaches to ELT in the university, and developing ELT syllabus) can be tackled. Secondly, the service English courses should be defined in light of the present English language teaching situation (section 2.3 Chapter 2) in the schools. This entails the investigation of the general linguistic background of the students, the basic requirements of the academic courses - both systemic and schematic knowledge - and the reorganisation of the service English courses to meet individual needs. As pointed out above, language courses that do not meet these fundamental requirements are certainly a waste of manpower and resources.

As indicated above, it has now become apparent that there is a gap between students' reading ability in English and the quality and level of reading their courses and course books require. Though it is claimed that the service English courses are taught to bridge this gap, it seems, as indicated above, that they are not effective in achieving that goal

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[1]It is to be understood that English is now considered as a foreign language rather than a second language in Ethiopia despite the fact that it is used as a medium of instruction in both secondary schools and institutions of higher learning. Recent research (McNab 1989) confirms that students and teachers alike in secondary schools find it difficult to operate in English, and it is reported that in most instances, they resort to using Amharic, or the vernacular, in classroom lessons.

(section 2.6 Chapter 2). As some researchers claim, service English courses remain ineffective if they are limited to providing exercises on formal items believed to be the sources of common learner errors. In other words, "treating the advanced learner's errors through remedial teaching may be doing no more than treating the symptoms and ignoring the causes" (Ellis 1987:71). The identified gap is not likely to be bridged by remedial courses, such as the service English courses in their current format. It is argued that service English courses should be designed in a way they can promote learner involvement in the process of language learning. In other words, as Dickinson (1987:2) argues, service English courses should not be "beset by techniques in which the tail wags the dog." Learner variables should be given the priority in selecting effective techniques of developing communicative competence in order to engender independent learning. In line with the basic objectives of Addis Ababa University, they should be designed in a way they allow for the training of learners towards autonomy. It is hypothesized that learner involvement could be facilitated through individualised learning. Individualisation could allow learners to develop their language learning capacities. As it is argued (Allwright 1988), individualisation of learning is a common characteristic of language classrooms which can be exploited for the purposes of generating effective language learning. In Addis Ababa University, students are supposed to do a lot of reading in class, on their own, to take notes in class and from reference materials, and undertake independent work in pursuit of academic knowledge. Such stipulations, if realized, constitute the groundwork for individualised reading in English for academic purposes.

Researchers emphasise that effective reading is only possible when the reader has the appropriate background knowledge of the material to be read (Carrell 1987:461). Smith (1982) defines background knowledge as constituting knowledge of the world, the reading process, and knowledge of the language used. Some schema theorists assert that knowledge structures or schemata, for instance, necessary for effective reading comprehension constitute content and formal schemata (Carrell 1987) or schematic and systemic knowledge (Widdowson 1983). The former refers to the knowledge of the subject matter, and the latter to the knowledge of the language. It has been indicated above that the service English courses are meant to develop the latter on the common assumption that if one knows the language, one can read fluently (section 3.2 Chapter 3).

However, it is argued that the service English courses have not done much to help students develop their background knowledge in order to become effective readers (section 2.6, section 2.7 Chapter 2, ***Appendix 3.2***). Some researchers suggest that it would be helpful to establish whether it is a linguistic or a reading problem (Alderson 1984). At the lower levels, it is claimed that there is evidence that it is basically linguistic (section 3.2 and section 3.3 Chapter 3). Others object the idea that a threshold of language learning is essential for reading comprehension to occur. They argue that "when instructional strategies make use of their students' extra-linguistic deficiencies, readers can offset their linguistic deficiencies" (Swaffar and others 1991:57). Similarly, Bloor (1985) states that it would be misleading to assume that all native speakers are necessarily good readers in their language. Thus, though it is essential, linguistic fluency alone does not necessarily result in reading fluency in the given language. An appropriate approach[2] to help students develop their reading ability should be sought.

It is argued that the mere teaching of linguistic items, as the service English courses do, does not promote effective reading. It is apparent that students' mastery of the language and knowledge of the reading process is so low that the service English courses, at least in their present form and content, cannot substantially help students to become better readers in English for academic purposes. The courses are limited both in content and approach. Their content provides an explanation of a few selected grammatical items, assumed to cause learning difficulties, mostly with structural exercises. The courses do not provide much to help students to develop their ability in the macro-skills of listening, reading, speaking and writing. Regarding the common approach employed, in a typical Freshman English class, a teacher explains a language item (usually reads the notes provided in the prescribed course book, or does all the reading passages for students and dictates answers), asks students to do the exercises that follow and, later, provides the answers. The role of the students is usually limited to doing any assigned exercises (and they have to be assigned to do the exercises the teacher wants them to do).

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[2]Anthony (cited in Allwright and Bailey 1991:8) distinguishes the difference between *approach*, *method* and *technique*. He states that an *approach* is a philosophy of language and learning that provides the theoretical underpinnings of language teaching. A *method* is a systematic collection of activities and procedures which are derived logically from the *approach*. *Techniques* are various activities implemented during a lesson, which stem, in turn, directly from the *method* chosen.

1.11 Teacher-student roles

In a typical Freshman English class the teacher is at the centre of the teaching-learning process. He/she is the source of the necessary knowledge, asks students to do assignments and marks their work. He/she sets the parameters of 'right' and 'wrong', and the learners should follow. He/she lectures and students take down notes to be studied and, in most cases, to be provided *verbatim* as answers during examinations (for the criticism of this posture see Freire cited in Rogers 1983). As Altman (1980:8) indicates, in such a pedagogical paradigm,

> all the elements of the course are fixed and inflexible, and have been established by the teacher or textbook author with no direct knowledge of, or concern for the particular characteristics of the learners in a specific classroom. The course has been designed to cater for the learning style of a hypothetical model learner, and whatever adaptation occurs is on the part of students enroled in this course who are expected to adapt themselves as much as possible to the characteristics of the hypothetical model. Those students who are able to approximate the model stand a good chance of success. Those students whose learner characteristics deviate too drastically from the model are given little encouragement to continue. Although teachers may attempt to provide remediation for learners who cannot adapt to the model, the inherent inflexibility of this pattern ultimately dooms such learners to failure or exclusion.

It seems that it is this inherent inflexibility that makes students to believe that the service English course books are extremely essential for success in the Freshman English examinations. As indicated above, both teachers and students feel that the course books have permanence (that is, they are there to be rigidly followed without any alteration, according to official prescriptions - they indicate the syllabus, the content and the methodology to be followed), and contain all what is required to be taught and learnt for success in the language tests (***Appendix 3.12***).

This approach presupposes that the teacher knows and the students are supposed to learn what he/she willing to impart to them. It also disregards the essential contributions of the learners to the teaching-learning situation and contradicts the fact that the students' background knowledge is essential for effective language learning. It has been argued above that the development of both schematic and systemic knowledge is essential for

effective reading instruction. However, the typical service English classroom is inherently inflexible to allow favourable learning environment to enhance learner autonomy. A common argument advanced in support of the above teaching-learning paradigm is derived from the wrong conception about the relationship between learning and teaching.

1.12 Teaching-learning relationship

The basis of the service English courses seems to be that whatever is taught is learned (section 2.7 Chapter 2 and section 4.1 Chapter 4 below). Riley (1987:75) argues that "teaching and learning are separate activities and ... they are not in a cause-effect relationship; teaching does not make learning happen." Despite this, it is a common understanding among teachers and administrators that the teacher should cover all the units in the specified course books; otherwise students cannot learn them or they cannot be held responsible for learning them (section 4.1 Chapter 4). Thus, learning is defined as the mere 'mastering' of selected formal items specified in the language course books. As pointed out above, the teacher's responsibility is to teach specific language items, and the learners' task is to 'learn' them, and prove that they have learned them when they are tested. Rogers (1983) and Altman (1980) claim that this posture wrongly assumes that the teaching-learning process is circumscribed to a mechanical give-take and return activity. In simplified terms, the teacher 'gives out' items of knowledge, the student 'takes' these and returns them when the teacher wants them back. It can be said that this could be one possible reason why there is an overemphasis on covering the units in the service English course books in good time for examinations (section 4.1 Chapter 4; section 5.311 Chapter 5). Rogers (1983:120) argues that "this notion of coverage is based on the assumption that what is taught is what is learned; what is presented is what is assimilated. I know of no assumption so obviously untrue."

Learners are taken not as individuals with different learning needs, wants and lacks (as Altman 1980:11-2; Allwright 1982; Carver 1984 indicate) but as a group to take up what is taught in the same manner and depth. As indicated above, teaching is again reduced to telling. Learners are 'told' and not 'taught' (section 2.6 and section 2.7 Chapter 2,

section 3. Chapter 3). Abebe (1987) argues that 'teaching' and 'telling' are two different things, and education has nothing to do with telling. Widdowson points out that training and education are at the opposite ends of a continuum, the latter mostly concerned with, for instance, teaching language for academic purposes (1983). Education is concerned with the creation of the *whole person*, a person, as Rogers (1983) argues, who has learned how to learn.

It is a common belief that the teaching of discrete language items or structures helps learners to develop their ability to function in that language, and, subsequently, to help them become fluent readers. This belief has given rise to various attempts to simplify aspects of usage to avoid language difficulty or complexity. Freshman English course books are based on the assumption that the bulk of the language lesson should be devoted to expounding aspects of usage and not use (section 2.3 and section 2.5 Chapter 2). As Widdowson (1990:113) points out

> a structural approach to language teaching lays emphasis on systemic knowledge and makes the assumption that once this is acquired the learners will discover for themselves how it is put to use in communication. Classroom activities will tend to be those focusing attention on deciphering rather than on interpretation by indexical inference. Language difficulty will generally be measured in terms of decipherability, the problem of which can be eased by reducing the symbolic complexity of the text.

It is indicated that the emphasis on teaching aspects of usage or linguistic items, or even the simplifying of a text, is thought to help learners to develop their communicative competence. Nonetheless, the teaching-learning process based on these assumptions has failed to produce independent learners as stipulated by the basic objectives of higher education in the country (section 2.5 Chapter 2). Most students are not able to read, for instance, as well or as much as required by their academic studies. The gap between students' reading ability and the readability of their course books is apparent in most social science classes (section 5.2 and section 5.3 Chapter 5).

1.2 Objectives of the study

This study, having examined the academic problems related to reading in English at the University (section 2.5 and section 2.6 Chapter 2 below), investigates a possible approach to develop students' reading ability in English for academic purposes. The approach is based on the assumption that individualising reading instruction promotes

(a) the development of the appropriate background knowledge essential for reading comprehension in English (section 3.2223 Chapter 3),
(b) individual participation in the teaching learning process (section 3.3 Chapter 3), and
(c) independent learning which is what is stated as desirable in the institutes of higher learning in the country (section 2.4 Chapter 2; section 3.3 Chapter 3).

The study, which is designed to meet individual learners' needs, proposes the use of individualised reading in order to develop learners' background knowledge and generate learner autonomy. The assumptions underlying the study are in harmony with the principal educational aims of the University (section 2.4 and section 2.5 Chapter 2 below). The individualised reading programme which is designed to help learners develop their background knowledge (essential for reading in English for academic purposes) by encouraging them to be aware of the reading process and reading strategies, is based on the following major assumptions (section 3.3 Chapter 3).

1.21 Learner differences

It is assumed that the first year students are different in their styles and rate of learning as they are also different in their cultural and linguistic background and what they bring to the learning environment (section 2.2 Chapter 2, section 4.2 and section 4.3 Chapter 4 below). Researchers on individual differences assert that learners are also different in what they bring to the learning situation (Skehan 1989; Ellis and Sinclair 1989; Dickinson 1987). It is essential that a learning environment be created to accommodate the basic differences so that learners could take the initiative to exploit their preferred styles and

rate of learning to develop their ability to read in English for academic purposes (Holec 1980:30-1; Brindley 1989:75; Riley 1987; Altman 1980:11-2). However, this does not imply that learners will not be exposed to effective strategies of learning to read and reading to learn. As Dickinson (1987:1) recommends, the study is based on the belief that some sort of greater flexibility can be adopted in the service English classrooms so that for instance, "teachers teach only part of the time, and the remaining time is devoted to facilitating learning in other ways; so that learners with special needs, whether in terms of aptitude, purposes, or in terms of their own availability, can be catered for; and so that every learner's right to self-direction is respected."

1.22 Learner autonomy

It is understood, however, that all learners may not like to take the responsibility for their learning. Some ask for teacher's guidance in identifying what to learn and how to learn (section 5.21 Chapter 5; ***Appendix 3.1***, ***Appendix 3.2***). However, as stipulated in the educational objectives of the university, whatever teacher guidance is provided should facilitate independent learning and the learning of how to learn to read in English for academic purposes. It would be misleading to assume that it is an end by itself. It has been mentioned above that the typical Freshman English class is teacher-dominated. The teacher[3] (or rather the Freshman English Testing Committee) decides what units to cover, how to cover and how to evaluate student performance. In most instances, the teacher picks up the selected a unit, explains the items (mainly linguistic), asks students to do or skip the exercises that follow and, then, marks students' answers or provides answers he/she thinks appropriate (section 4.341 Chapter 4 below).

The individualised reading programme is based on facilitating learner participation in selecting what to read and how to read both in class and outside. However, as indicated in section 5.21 and section 5.31, due to the contemporary teacher-student expectations,

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[3]When a reference is made to the teacher, it is implied that the teacher represents the authority, whether it is the Freshman English Testing Committee (in this case), or otherwise. It is also intended to indicate that learning decisions are not made by the language learner. So, the reference is not necessarily to the individual Freshman English lecturer, but to all lecturers as operating according to institutional expectations.

the programme has suggested the use of selected reading packages, that is the *ELSIP* and the *SRA* reading materials, for learners to learn to read in English for academic purposes. Learners are encouraged to select appropriate reading cards or books from the collection, exercise and develop their reading competence using these materials and to be able to assess their performance in order to define what they need and what they lack objectively. Such a process of learning by doing is believed to generate learner responsibility for one's own learning to read for academic purposes.

1.23 Learner training

Dickinson (1987:2) argues that learners do not become self-directed and "achieve autonomy by being told to, nor by being denied conventional class teaching" (section 3.4 Chapter 3). This is likely to frustrate any learning. In fact, some students prefer teacher direction (***str. 3.1267 Appendix 3.12***, for example). But, it is argued that teacher direction can be taken as part of the process of learner training, and not as an end by itself. It should be exploited in such a way that it engenders learner independence and learner directed learning. As Ellis and Sinclair (1989), Holec (1980:30ff), Allwright (1982), among others, argue, as a language learning and teaching approach, individualisation does not imply denying the learner to learn from the teacher or from other students. It is recommended that learners should get the appropriate guidance from the teacher, the materials and other learners.

However, the study is based on the philosophical assumption that no knowledge is permanent, that is, today's knowledge about something may be proved to be wrong tomorrow, and that effective learning constitutes *learning how to learn*. As Rogers (1983:120) points out, the educated person is the one who has learned how to learn or to adapt to change. He states further by indicating that the educated person is the one

> who has realized that no knowledge is secure, that only the process of *seeking* knowledge gives a basis for security. Changingness, a reliance on *process* rather than upon static knowledge, is the only thing that makes any sense as a goal for education in the modern world.

The study emphasizes developing the awareness of the process of learning to read (and not merely the spelling out of a recommended 'dosage' of reading skills or strategies to be learned and applied) and encouraging the use of effective reading strategies not only for the purpose of passing reading tests in Freshman English but also developing the ability to apply them in the other academic courses. Basically, this is what should identify the service English courses from the other social science courses. As language service courses, they should enable students to learn appropriate reading strategies so that they could effectively use them to learn or read their other academic courses. Currently, the service English courses are handled in the same manner as the other social science academic courses.

1.3 The scope of the study

The pilot study was based on the first year social science students of the 1989-90 academic year. The experiment was undertaken in the second semester of the same year. It lasted for four months. Six sections (out of the twenty one social science first year sections), involving about one hundred and eighty students, were selected for the study. At the end of the study, two of the six sections, one control and one study, did not take the post tests for reasons described in section 4.1 and section 4.2 Chapter 4 below. The results of the pilot study are analyzed in section 5.2 Chapter 5.

The main study was undertaken in the 1990-91 academic year. Thirteen out of the twenty one sections of the first year social science students (section 4.3 below) were selected using the criteria discussed in section 4.1 Chapter 4. The thirteen sections included about 420 students. About 210 students were assigned to constitute the study group. The remaining were considered as control. Both studies operated under the following constraints:

1.31 Administrative constraints

The administrative staff concerned with freshman courses felt that it was illegal to use different sets of teaching materials other than the officially prescribed ones in the service

English classes. Another point of objection was that the time allotted for the teaching of the grammatical items specified in the two course books was not enough. It is indicated in section 4.2 and section 4.3 Chapter 4 that two hours in a week were allotted to the reading lab and one hour per week was assigned to the classroom discussion. It was made clear to the authorities that during the discussion classes students would be advised to cover the Freshman English course book and to do exercises similar to those in the course books and Freshman English test papers. This was mainly done to convince the authorities that the students were learning Freshman English and not another subject, and that they were appropriately *being prepared* for the conventional Freshman English examination. This is discussed in detail in section 4.1 and section 4.2 below.

1.32 Staff-student attitude

The study recommended what was considered to be unorthodox by some lecturers and students (section 5.31 and section 5.4 Chapter 5). Their fears were mainly based on two factors: the study recommended a different set of self-access materials for developing reading; it also relegated the standard Freshman English 101A and Freshman English 101B course books to become supplementary materials for developing learners' grammar awareness. Their fears were made worse by the stance the social science Freshman administrative staff took regarding the study (section 2.4 Chapter 2 and section 4.1 Chapter 4 below). Thus the study had to make some compromises. Lecturers were allowed to recommend the 'discussion' of the grammatical items specified in the books during the discussion sessions as outlined in section 4.23 and section 4.34 Chapter 4.

1.33 Time constraints

It has been pointed out in section 4.1 Chapter 4 below that the study sessions had to fit into the official schedule of the first year students. More time could not be devoted to the individualised reading sessions despite the need for such a programme to prove to be effective within the limited academic year. Moreover, one of the major factors for selecting sections for the study was based on the suitability of the students' Freshman English schedule to allow them to use the Spoken English laboratory when it was free.

This had to be worked out to avoid any clashes or inconveniences. It was not allowed to make any changes in the schedule of the first year students (section 4.1 Chapter 4).

The constraint of time may also have a strong bearing on explicit change of behaviour as a result of learning. Despite the fact that learners differ in their rate of learning and some may learn fast, in most cases time plays a significant role in the learning process. Learning is related to exploring and trial-and-error (section 5.1 Chapter 5). All this calls for the availability of adequate time for exploration and experimentation in the process of learning (Geddes and Sturtridge 1982:2*f*; Holec cited in Tumposky 1982:11-3).

Both the pilot and study were limited to one semester or four months each (section 4.2 and section 4.3 below Chapter 4). Learning outcomes in such a short period of time might not be significant though it is anticipated that there would be conspicuous attitudinal changes (section 5.1, section 5.21 and section 5.31 Chapter 5).

1.4 Research design and methodology

The study focused on first year social science students. It had two stages. The first was the pilot study conducted in the second semester of 1989-90 academic year. This was mainly planned to trial the design of the study and the materials - the self-access materials - intended for the study. The second was the main study conducted in the first semester (originally planned to last two semesters but discontinued due to sudden closure of the university in the second semester of 1990-91 academic year (section 2.4 Chapter 2 below). Both studies were constrained by the variables mentioned in section 1.3 above, section 4.2 and section 4.3 Chapter 4 below. The selected population was categorized into study and control in both studies (section 4.1 Chapter 4).

The materials selected for the individualised reading sessions were the English Language Self Instruction Package, ***ELSIP*** for short - a package consisting of graded readers with tapes produced by various ELT publishers and suitable as self access materials and the ***SRA*** reading package ***3a*** (1985 revised edition). The former was used with the pilot group and the latter with the corpus study group (section 4.2224 and section 4.335

Chapter 4 for the description and utilization of these materials).

The test package for all groups for pretest and post test consisted of the following:

a. two sets of questionnaires on students' awareness of the reading process, and on their reading habits and styles. This is explained in section 4.331 Chapter 4 below. The results are discussed in section 5.31 Chapter 5.
b. two sets of general English language ability tests drawn from earlier test papers of Freshman English 101A and Freshman English 101B as explained in section 4.332 Chapter 4 below. The test results are indicated in section 5.22 and section 5.32 in Chapter 5.
c. two sets of cloze tests to establish the readability levels of the first year course books as described in section 4.223 and section 4.333 Chapter 4 below. Section 5.22 and section 5.32 Chapter 5 analyze the effect of the approach on students' performance in the cloze tests, that is, whether or not the approach has enabled the students to read their course books without any problems.

1.5 Hypotheses

The study is launched to try a possible approach to developing students' reading ability so that the gap between first year students' reading ability and the readability of their course books could be substantially and effectively reduced. Thus this would enable students to function more efficiently as university students. The underlying assumption of the study, based on the research findings cited in section 2.5 and section 2.6 Chapter 2 below, is that the students' background knowledge (both systemic and schematic knowledge) is deficient due to problems in the educational system (section 2.2 and section 2.4 Chapter 2) and the remedial English courses, in their present format and content, could not help students to cope with the academic demands in the university.

The study assumes background knowledge in its narrowest sense by deriving it from the apparent objective and immediate needs of the students. Background knowledge is circumscribed within the boundaries of general English language improvement, reading

comprehension development, and increased awareness and appropriate use of the reading process and reading strategies respectively. The study is thus designed to measure any significant improvements in these elements.

In other words, it is hypothesized that at the end of the study besides the apparent but unmeasurable changes in learning behaviour, students will make significant improvements in the following:

a. general English language ability as measured by the Freshman English 101A and Freshman English 101B test papers (the results are indicated in section 5.223 and section 5.323 Chapter 5),

b. reading comprehension ability as indicated on the Cambridge University Local Examinations Syndicate *First Certificate in English* (the results are discussed in section 5.221 and section 5.321 Chapter 5)

c. readiness to cope with the academic course books as shown on their performance on cloze tests drawn from their academic course books (the readability test results are discussed in section 5.222 and section 5.322), and

d. awareness of the reading process and the use of appropriate reading strategies for academic purposes as indicated in the responses of the students to the questionnaire on reading, and the various staff and student reports on their experience (responses to the questionnaire on reading skills and strategies are indicated in section 5.21, section 5.31 and section 5.4 Chapter 5).

1.6 Contents of the study

The recommended approach to reading instruction in English for academic purposes in the first year programme of the Addis Ababa University is designed in such a way that it responds to the major learner variables. These variables are supposedly the products of the socio-cultural and linguistic diversities of the country. It is implied that the

students joining the university come with these and other variables. These variables, it is believed, may affect the teaching of English in the country. The geographical, historical and socio-cultural diversities have affected the objectives, patterns and, subsequently, the quality of the educational system in the country in general and the university in particular. Chapter Two surveys the role of English language teaching in the educational system in the country. This chapter is concluded by citing the relevant literature on the service English courses in the university and recommending a study to be made on better and more effective approaches to reading instruction within the limits described.

The search for a possible approach for effective reading instruction is made by citing the relevant theoretical constructs of applied linguistics (Kennedy 1989:xi). Chapter Three contextualises the major assumptions of the study. It surveys the appropriate theories of reading and the individualisation of instruction in English language education. The chapter concludes by suggesting the design of a course of study to develop effective reading in English for academic purposes.

It is hypothesized that individualised reading instruction results in improvement in students' reading comprehension ability, general English language ability, their readiness to cope with the academic studies, and their awareness of the reading process and the appropriate reading strategies. Chapter Four describes the design of the study, both of the pilot and main study, the reading materials used for individualised reading, and the tests employed to establish whether or not students in the study group have become effective readers. The chapter also features the major constraints encountered in the selection of the students for the study and in conducting the experiment.

The results of the tests administered to establish whether or not students in the main study have improved in developing their reading ability - reading comprehension, reading levels of the course books, linguistic proficiency - as a result of the approach used is discussed in Chapter Five. Chapter Five also consists of the comparison of the students' responses to the questionnaire on reading before and after the study, and in this chapter, an attempt is made to highlight the changes in students' conceptions about the reading process and

reading strategies in light of the approach used. Students' and instructors' attitudes to individualised reading and learning is also included in this chapter.

Chapter Six summarises the theoretical constructs underpinning the reading process and individualisation as an approach to develop students' reading ability in English for academic purposes. This chapter begins with a brief description of the salient educational problems in the country in general and in Addis Ababa University in particular. It is argued that one major source of problem in the service English courses is that they do not pursue an approach that addresses individual differences both in background knowledge, cognitive styles and strategies and learning strategies. They do not build on these. This chapter summarises the output of the research in order to justify that individualised reading instruction is a possible approach to help students develop their systemic and schematic knowledge that is claimed by current research as crucial for reading in English for academic purposes (Moran and Williams 1993, Grabe 1991). Finally, the chapter concludes by suggesting some topics, related to the current study, for further investigation and study.

CHAPTER TWO

Background of the study

2.1 Introduction

Critics of the Ethiopian educational system raise the medium of instruction as one of the major causes for the growing decline in the quality of education. It is argued that since students are made to learn in English, they are not able to learn as efficiently as is desirable. Neither the teachers nor the students, it is argued, seem to find operating in English as easy as they might do, for instance, in Amharic (Stoddart 1986). In most instances, all the educational drawbacks are attributed to the use of English as a medium of instruction. It can also be concurred that the educational system is not in harmony with the fundamental needs of the country. Moreover, it seems that the country cannot afford to provide the appropriate funding and running of the country's schools for the ever-increasing number of children (Rogers 1969; Last 1983). Thus, most schools are crowded and usually proper attention is not given to students to learn as efficiently as the resources could permit. It is argued that the crisis in education is not only caused by poor financing of the education, but also by the fact that a foreign language is used as a medium of education (Rogers 1979).

The most pressing need in the educational sphere in developing countries has been the establishing of an appropriate educational system to enhance socio-cultural and technological development on one hand and to maintain certain traditions and cultural values on the other. Especially after the Second World War, several countries have adopted the Western educational system to serve mainly the task of national reconstruction and scientific development. Apparently, this decision has an embedded paradox. Researchers (Clark 1987) agree that any educational system embodies the socio-cultural values of the particular society; that is, the purpose of education is usually to promote certain social ideals and value systems. For instance, the Western educational system promotes Western value systems. Thus, a country *importing* a Western educational

system for national reconstruction and the perpetuation of certain domestic social values may discover that the system does not function as planned; that is, it might not help in national reconstruction and technological development. The educational system may create alienation and disillusion (Teshome 1979, Seyoum 1987).

Another problem tied to the establishment of a viable educational system is the task of selecting a medium for education. In countries where there is a continuity in the educational set up, that is, a situation where a country is not forced by circumstances to import an educational system prevails, the question of selecting a language for instruction may not arise. However, in a country where many languages are spoken and where a decision has been made to *import*, for instance, a Western style of education, the tendency is to either adopt the language of the imported educational system or to select the dominant local language/s. The former is usually expedient, at least in the short term (though there is the danger of overreliance on imported teaching materials and expatriate teaching staff as it is evident in Ethiopia specially at the initial stages), and the latter is controversial and expensive since it would involve, among other things, the selection and, sometimes, standardization of a domestic language/s (Fishman and others 1968) and the training of personnel to translate and to write teaching materials in one or more of the selected local languages). Apparently, a developing country is not economically strong enough to undertake the second option. So, the use of an imported language as a medium of instruction in many developing countries may not necessarily be motivated by the assumption that the language promises various coveted opportunities for the educated (as Rogers 1989 implies), but it may be because the country concerned may not be economically and politically ready to substitute it by domestic languages.

It is believed that the selection of a certain language as a medium for education is usually justified, among other things, by socio-political, historical and geographical factors. In other words, a given country would be forced to adopt a certain language for education, be it domestic or imported, by the historical, geographical, and the socio-political and economic factors. McNab (1989:7) states that "language policies for education are ... a product of the interaction between national objectives as expressed in the education objectives, sociopolitical history, and the language situation of the country." In Ethiopia,

it has been a long standing policy to promote the use of Amharic in all educational levels along with the use of English as a medium of instruction in the secondary and tertiary levels. The promotion of a single language in the educational system is believed to encourage unity in this multi-ethnic and multi-linguistic country (Markakis 1974).

With a population of about 43.3 million based on an estimation for 1985 - as much as 23.3 million dependents (6.9 million youth, 16.4 million school age) and 19.9 million labour force (Asmerom 1988:28) - and a GNP per capita of about $110, Ethiopia is one of the poorest countries in the world. About 89 per cent of the population is rural and agriculture accounts for 50 per cent of GDP, 90 per cent of the export, and provides 85 per cent of the employment. Though agriculture is the main potential resource for development, it has remained basically subsistent and consistently affected by a series of droughts and famine, poor methods of farming and civil strife that have precipitated the dislocation of a large majority of the farming population for many years. The topography of the country sustains nomadic pastoralism, in the semi-arid lowland areas, and sedentary farming in the highlands.

It is to be noted that the country's topography is characterised by rugged terrain and steep valleys, and mostly non-navigable rivers that hinder internal transport and communication (McNab 1989:41). However, the country's "mountains have afforded a large amount of protection from outside forces and have allowed Ethiopia to develop its social and political system in relative isolation" (Schwab 1985:4). The isolation was not only with the outside world but also within the regions of the country. Such a phenomenon, coupled with other domestic and international factors, has encouraged the sustenance for many years the growth of strong ethno-linguistic entities in circumscribed localities due to daunting problems of transportation and communication.

In addition to the topography of the country, the strategic location of the country has also contributed to its linguistic diversity. Ethiopia is located on the edge of the *fragmentation belt* of languages that extend from Senegal in West Africa to the horn of Africa or East African Highlands (Dalby quoted in McNab 1987:9). Linguists have found out that three of the six of the Afro-Asiatic language families (Greenberg cited in McNab 1989:9)

(Semitic, Cushitic and Omotic language families) are found in Ethiopia. Again these major linguistic families consist of about eighty different languages (Trudeau 1967; McNab 1989). Although such a linguistic diversity is not uncommon in sub-Saharan Africa, language researchers confirm that Ethiopia is unique in the region in the fact that it has maintained a long tradition of writing for both secular and religious affairs since the time of the Aksum civilisation (that is, the fourth century A.D.) (McNab 1987:9*f*; Pankhurst 1955; Markakis 1974).

However, as mentioned above, the fact that the country has a long tradition of writing has not helped much to spread literacy in the country. Most of the languages in the country do not have writing systems. It is only recently that the percentage of illiteracy has been claimed to be lowered (section 2.2 below). In sum, the geography of the country has encouraged the sustenance of many languages, the majority of which have no writing systems.

Another factor that has promoted the diverse socio-cultural and linguistic phenomena is related to the history of the country. Three major historical epochs can be arbitrarily established to examine the prominent precedents for the development of the ethno-linguistic diversities in the country. The first epoch starts with the rise and growth of the Aksumite civilisation in the fourth century A.D., its demise with the rise of Islam in the ninth century, and the migration of the Oromos to the lands of the predominantly Christian highlanders (the Amhara and Tigrean population) in the sixteenth century. Markakis (1974:13) states "the Aksumite empire, which flourished on the northern part of the plateau for an extended period beginning with classical times, is considered the lineal ancestor of Ethiopia." During this era, it seems that there were only a limited number of languages spoken. This era is noted for, among other things, the growth of *Ge'ez* literature, the expansion of Islam in the country and the penetration of the Oromo to the central and northern highlands. These phenomena accentuated the socio-linguistic diversity of the country. The empire lost its ports at the Red Sea and the strategic caravan routes during the expansion of Islam in the eighth century which terminated the era of Aksum as a centre of power. The religious and political phenomenon, coupled with the influx of the Oromos to the central highlands, resulted in civil strife and the weakening

of the central power (Markakis 1974:14*ff*; Levin 1965; Trimingham 1965).

The second epoch ushers in the beginnings of the seventeenth century, when the Christian Kingdom was effectively sealed off by the Turks from external contacts, and culminates in the beginning of the twentieth century, when the Italians invaded the country in 1936. This period is characterised by features of decentralisation and the proliferation of small states (Markakis 1974; Schwab 1985), the further expansion of Islam (Trimingham 1965), and, towards the end of this period, the major expansion of the state towards the south and the incorporation of many ethno-linguistic groups, especially in the southern parts of the country, and the gradual growth of the power of the central government that was only frustrated by the short-lived Italian occupation of 1936-41 (Lipsky 1967:5*ff*; Markakis 1974; Pankhurst 1955). Towards the end of this period, an attempt was made to found a Western style modern educational system, but it was not made available to the majority of the Ethiopian population which remained predominantly illiterate.

The last epoch can be taken to occupy present day Ethiopia and the developments in the country after the 1940's. The fundamental task of the kings that reigned since the end of the late nineteenth century was to consolidate power and to dilute ethno-linguistic diversities. Sjostrom and Sjostrom (1983:34) state that one of the most important goals of the late emperor, Haile Sellasie, "was the creation of a strong central state power, thus eliminating much of the power of the regional aristocracy and landowners, as well as the risk of uprisings in the provinces."

Thus, it is contended that soon after the liberation, the Emperor's attempts to introduce a modern type of education was rather motivated by this objective than by the awareness of the impending socio-economic problems and ethno-linguistic diversities of the country. To realise this, that is, the perpetuation of a strong centralised power led by a dominant ethno-linguistic group, the emperor, according to Sjostrom and Sjostrom (1983:34) "needed a corps of bureaucrats with a modern education, who gave their first loyalty to the Emperor. The development of an industrial sector, which was to finance the centralisation process, also called for a sophisticated state apparatus. Thus a modern educational system, especially at the secondary level, became necessary."

English language teaching was, thus, introduced along with a modern Western style of education in Ethiopia, a country with a long tradition of archaic feudalism, backwardness, and a high rate of illiteracy. "With the liberation of Ethiopia in 1941 ... English became the medium of instruction in all government schools, a reflection of the new close ties with Britain following the liberation" (McNab 1989:79; Desta 1979; Pankhurst 1955). Western education, apparently based on the British educational value system, was more or less imported as it was rather than adapted to meet the prevailing needs of the newly liberated country that demanded modern infrastructure for reconstruction. Of course, as Abbott states, one may claim that "western education systems, along with their values and aims, were implanted or imported into countries ... which could well devise more suitable ones for themselves" (1989:16). Whether the imperial government, however, could have found its own educational system to further the planned technological development and enhance centralised power is a question for speculation. It might also be questionable whether the government had the power to make the decision in light of the prevailing conditions, immediately before the start of the Second World War. Thus, it is difficult to conjecture what could have happened if the government had decided to evolve its own *unique* system of education to produce skilled manpower for the emerging bureaucracy introduced basically to facilitate the process of centralisation and modernisation.

Admittedly, the importing of a Western educational system could have its own adverse consequences. In effect, "when a modern western-type of education system was introduced into Ethiopia, it was necessary not only to employ foreign staff but also to import the textbooks... (which) were not only written in a foreign language but were also reflective of a culture and an environment entirely foreign to the average pupil" (Maaza 1961:18). Fassil states that the educational system which was "introduced in the country was almost entirely the replica of the European [sic] system]. In 1949/50 close to 90 per cent of the teachers were expatriates who came from various countries, including Britain, Canada, Egypt, France, India, (and) Sweden. The curriculum, the teachers, and the teaching materials were generally imported" (1990:13-14). Moreover, English language teaching for secondary schools was based on the syllabus for London University's ***General Certificate of Examination*** at the initial stages (Madsen 1976:489). This has its historical precedent.

English language teaching in Ethiopia dates back as far as the 1940's when it was introduced as a language of instruction in secondary schools. "In July 1943, the government established the Haile Selassie I Secondary School in Addis Ababa with some assistance from the British Council. The establishment of this school marks the beginning of secondary education in Ethiopia" (Fassil 1990). It was about this time that English was adopted as a second language for the country's emerging bureaucracy and expanding international relations. Ethiopia, then coming of age, needed a language for international relations and its choice of English for this purpose was not accidental. As Kennedy points out, "policy decisions on the role of English in a country's educational system are not made in a vacuum and they will always be related to decision takers' political views" (1989:3). The British played a significant and decisive role in the struggle for liberating the country from five years of Italian occupation (Pankhurst 1955; Desta 1979). Moreover, the emergence of America as a world power (and Ethiopia's growing relations with America) and the widespread use of English in international relations specially during and after the Second World War influenced the imperial government to adopt English as the second language for its bureaucracy and as a language of instruction in schools. Of course, English language teaching was predominantly based on an imported syllabus (Maaza 1961; Trudeau 1967 ; Fassil 1990; Teshome 1990).

The choice of English as a medium of education was relatively easy to realise as there was no school system in operation using a modern language for education except the few traditional church and *Quran* schools that used *Ge'ez*, now a dead language, and Arabic respectively. These traditional schools were limited in all respects and their educational objectives, basically religious, did not match with the contemporary needs of the country - the training of an able elite which would facilitate the running of a modern state and expedite the centralisation process. The emperor was able to enlist both British and American support to found new schools and to modernize the few old ones (Trudeau 1967; Desta 1979; Fassil 1990).

Since then, English has remained as a language of instruction, with modifications in syllabus, methodology and teaching materials, despite some recommendations (section 2.3 below) that it should be replaced by the official language, Amharic (Tesfaye and Taylor

1976; McNab 1987; 1989). Rogers (1967) and Stoddart (1986) claim that English-medium schooling and English language teaching in Ethiopia is not informed by the specific needs of the country and it is expensive and unjustifiable for the country to run its education in a foreign language.

2.2 Education in Ethiopia

It is mentioned above (section 2.1) that Ethiopia had some form of educational system, written literature and a writing system of its own for centuries. Pankhurst (unlike some scholars such as Trudeau) believes that the present educational system is "profoundly moulded" by the past. He expounds his argument by stating

> it owes much of its distinctive character to the fact that Ethiopia is the only African country to have both remained predominantly Christian for over a millennium and a half, and to have preserved its ancient independence throughout the European 'Scramble for Africa'. Contacts with the nearby Arab world have, however, had a strong influence in certain areas, while the activities of missionaries of various nationalities and creeds have also at various times had a by no means insignificant impact (1976:305).

The Ethiopian church schools were mostly religious schools that trained individuals to serve the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. The education consisted in "the first stages of the students career in learning to read, write, and recite a few biblical texts in *Ge'ez*, ... (the) ecclesiastical language" (Pankhurst 1976:305). Pankhurst (307-8), by quoting C.H. Walker, a sometime British consul, expresses the type of teachers employed, in the following words:

> The teacher may be a priest who is a *Liq*, or Professor, who knows much learning. Some of the *Liqawnt* [plural of *Liq*] have a medicine which they give to the boys that they remember well. Or he may be an ordinary priest or even a scribe, though the scribe they praise not overmuch, for he may work cunning and wander here and there round the town. But a priest [or rather the teacher] will sit as a judge and will punish the boy who errs, crying: 'Was that what I told thee yesterday?' pulling and twisting his ear, till he pours forth tears. Thus he will learn, perforce.

Apparently, this description embodies the traditional educational concept of the roles of

teachers and students, the methodology of teaching and the concept and transmission of knowledge. For various reasons, most of the students in church schools dropped out but the remaining few pursued such fields as church music, poetry, theology, church history, philosophy, manuscript writing, and painting. According to Markakis (1974:143), "in addition to the exclusively religious curriculum, which includes reading and writing of *Ge'ez* and Amharinya [the official language], the student is imbued with the traditional values of humility, obedience to authority, and deference for age and rank," considered as the fundamental tenets of traditional Ethiopian education.

It is believed that the church school system started during the Aksumite period when Christianity was introduced to the country about the fourth century A.D. (section 2.1 above). Haile Gabriel (1976:339) states that "the church schools originated in the 'golden time' of the Church from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries in which literature of the Church reached its peak. After the ... seventeenth century, cultural activities declined," and so did the church educational system and its capability to transform itself to the changing needs of the society and to spread literacy among the population in full scale. However, researchers confirm that it remained the sole centre for scholarship for the few elite in the predominantly christian population until the late nineteenth century when the Western style modern educational system was introduced.

The *Quranic* schools provided similar services for the Muslim communities of the country. The schools used Arabic and they taught Arabic letters and reading of the *Quran,* Islamic cannon law (*fiqh*), Arabic grammar (*nahew)*, and the commentaries or *tefsir* (Haile Gabriel 1976:339-370). However, it is claimed that "the average rural school offers only the most elementary study of Arabic and some desultory reading of the *Quran*" (Markakis 1974:143).

One source of contention regarding the introduction of modern Western style of education in Ethiopia is that it was not based on the traditional educational system, especially that of the Church, which was not exclusively religious. Some feel that the modern educational system has the traditional legacies of the church (Teshome 1990:69*f*; Pankhurst 1976). However, others, for instance Trudeau (cited in Teshome 1990:69*f*),

argue that "these church schools and monasteries ... did not influence the modern educational system of higher education." There could be two major reasons for this. As Teshome (1979) points out, the traditional educational system was so archaic that it could not be redesigned to suit the purpose of establishing a modern centralised power with an effective modern machinery to maintain it, though it had remained for centuries as a strong tool for sustaining political power. It was felt that it was impossible to remodel it to play a significant role in the newly emerging socio-economic and political challenge. Another reason could be that the Church along with the traditional nobility constituted a 'threat' to the Emperor's government. A reliance on the Church, which championed a conservative outlook and that shared an unchallengeable power with the state for centuries (Taddese 1972), for creating a corps of bureaucrats loyal to the Emperor would have been unwise and might have frustrated his ambitions to become the uncontested ruler of the country (Schwab 1985; Sjostrom and Sjostrom 1983). With the influence of the European powers, especially Britain, France and Italy (Markakis 1974:144) from the times of Menelik II, Haile Selassie, the emperor, might have thought the European educational model was much more convenient and appropriate. Whatever the case may be, soon after the liberation in 1941, one of the major reconstruction tasks of the imperial government was "the creation of a mass education system capable of providing Ethiopia with a corps of educated personnel from all walks of life to replace the traditional nobility in responsible positions throughout the country" (Lipsky cited in Haile 1976:324).

Modern education in Ethiopia expanded rapidly specially in urban centres. However, it was confronted by a series of impending hurdles. Markakis (1974:149ff) points out the system suffered from unevenness in many aspects of its development - the glaring disparity between urban and rural areas and among regions (Addis Ababa and Shoa took the lion's share), the sex ratio, severe attrition rate, and the shortage of teaching personnel. This is also confirmed by Schwab (1985:87-8). Trudeau (in Fassil 1990:12) states that the emphasis of the educational system in the 1940's and 1950's was academic despite the fact that it was adopted to promote technological know-how. He further states that

> Everyone directed his attention to the High School Certificate (either the London General Certificate of Education or the Ethiopian School Leaving Certificate)... . Commercial, technical and agricultural education were regarded as second class

> education, reserved for those who could not make the grade in academic secondary schools, or who had to go to work immediately after finishing their secondary education.

Despite its rapid expansion in the thirty years of its existence, pre-1974 education could not emancipate itself from some burgeoning constraints. Fassil (1990) states that the participants of the *Education Sector Review* (which was established to evaluate and suggest solutions to the problems of the educational system) asserted the following drawbacks of the contemporary educational system: the problem of alienation of the Ethiopian youth by reason of an imported educational system (see also Teshome 1990; Girma 1992;Seyoum 1987); the elitist and rigid character of the educational system in spite of the diversity of the conditions that prevailed in the country; the problem of wastage on all levels of education; the inequitable distribution of educational opportunity, and the overcentralisation of the educational administration. According to Gilks (1975:95),

> the most telling of the criticisms is perhaps the objection to the concentration on academic themes, the assumption that all students will progress through the system to become bureaucrats; and this in a country where 95 per cent of the population is engaged in agriculture or related topics. The curriculum is laid down by specialists, often foreigners, who have little or no knowledge of the rural scene, and often little or no knowledge of the classroom either. Many of those involved in the curriculum planning have not even been teachers.

Incidentally, it might be interesting to relate whether such an educational legacy had an impact on post-revolution education. The objective of using the school as "subordinate to the political system and only permitted to change in a direction desired" (Sjostrom and Sjostrom 1983:41) continued. The government exploited "education to become a political weapon in its struggle to tie the population to its policies" (Schwab 1985:89). Its fundamental policy was the consolidation and centralisation of power and the promotion of an ideology. Besides serving as a means of the propagation of Marxist-Leninist ideology, the educational system was planned to help enhance production. With six years of primary, two years of junior secondary, four years of senior secondary and usually four years of higher education, the government emphasised polytechnic education and endeavoured to discourage an elite educational system. "The tempo of educational

progress was fast, though without a concomitant growth in the national economy (Fassil 1990:113). In 1988 in a workshop on population and youth in relation to education and employment, it was reported that the literacy attendance rate was as high as 71 per cent [sic], though it could not be claimed that all those who attended literacy classes completed their lessons and became literate. It was also claimed that formal education increased dramatically as indicated in Table 2.1 below.

Level	no. of schools	no. of students*	enrolment rate (per cent)
primary s.	8323	2.89	35
junior s.s	1044	0.461	21
senior s.s.	275	0.380	11

Table 2.1 Formal Education enrolment in 1988

source: Report of the National Seminar/Workshop 1988
Population and Youth in Relation to Education and Employment
(* in millions)

According to Table 2.1 above, 35 per cent of all school age children attend the primary school, 21 per cent attend the junior secondary school and only 11 per cent go to the senior secondary schools. This percentage decreases substantially in the institutes of higher learning. In the 1989 *Basic Education Bulletin,* the Ministry of Education revealed that the average pupil/teacher ratio was as high as 50 in junior secondary schools and the average pupil/school ratio was 1392 students at senior secondary level for 1988. Moreover, 98.1 per cent of the pupils enrolled in government schools while only 1.9 per cent were in non-government schools (Table 2.2 below).

Table 2.2 indicates increases in numbers. The increase in student population has not been accompanied by increases in school facilities, teacher qualifications and other resources (Last 1983; Eshetu 1991:220). According to Table 2.2, it may not be difficult to envisage a typical Ethiopian senior secondary school. Apparently, it would be similar to the one described either by McNab (1989) or even Stoddart (1986). Most senior secondary schools are crowded and operate on a shift basis, that is, most students usually receive half-day schooling, and the average pupil-teacher ratio is mostly more than 50. Most schools do not have libraries. It is indicated in Table 2.2 that the government manages the bulk of the educational establishment, thus making it easy for the government to

operate a highly centralised system and promote its own ideology. The fact that the Ethiopian educational system is highly centralised is also confirmed by the report of the English language teaching country profile of the British Council (1986). Admittedly, education in the country has come a long way forward from where it used to be in the

ratio/ per cent	year	type	primary	junior secondary	senior secondary
average pupil-teacher ratio	1974	-	46	32	28
	1988	-	49	50	41
average pupil-school ratio	1974	-	312	242	726
	1988	-	344	436	1392
pupils (in government and non-government schools) in percentage	1974	government	75	83.1	91.9
		non.gov't	25	16.9	8.1
	1988	government	89.7	90.7	98.1
		non.gov't	10.3	9.3	1.9

Table 2.2 Comparison of student population in schools in 1977 and 1988

source: *Basic Education Statistics, 1989,* Ministry of Education

1940's and 1950's. The old curriculum that came out in 1949 was inadequate and the instructional materials were based on foreign experience and they were not "geared to the needs of Ethiopians" (Teshome 1979).

Since 1974 the basic aim of education has been rendered to be less elitist than it used to be. More schools were opened to reach the mass of the people though without additional resources for the implementation of the educational objectives. Eshetu (1991:220) points out that "education expenditure in Ethiopia up to 1981 represents the largest component of social development expenditure, but its relative share of total spending has been declining (from 14.4 per cent in 1972, to 9.3 per cent in 1981". In relation to the national budget, "between 1972 and 1984 Ethiopia spent on average 20.6 per cent total public expenditure on social development, slightly less than the 22.8 per cent average for East

Africa region. Moreover, the overall trend has been downward, declining from 24.5 per cent of budget in 1972 to 15.7 per cent in 1984" (219). The amount of funds earmarked for education for 1985 was Ethiopian birr 319 million[1] (Asmerom 1988). Apparently, this amount could be claimed not to be sufficient for the effective running of the country's schools. In fact, most of the money goes to paying teachers' salaries.

The military government (not unlike its predecessor) emphasized the instrumentality of education for social change - education for enhancing production, for scientific research and above all, for raising political consciousness (Ministry of Education 1984; McNab 1989). It is indicated that its policy discouraged elitist education and there is a gradual shift of emphasis to polytechnic education. The educational system was planned to develop "an all-round profile rather than a narrower academic ability" (Last 1983). However, like in the pre-1974 period, educational development was inhibited by economic and political exigencies (Markakis 1974:154*f*).

Despite its plans and attempts to employ education as a means for change and to revolutionize the educational process to reach the vast majority of the peasantry, the military government was unable to appreciate the profound economic and socio-linguistic complications that its plans were bearing. The educational system which was highly centralized was affected by intrinsic and extrinsic factors. There were problems in implementation, a long-standing characteristic feature of the Ministry of Education (Tesfaye and Taylor 1976), and other factors such as economic backwardness and stagnation, and political instability (Last 1983) eroding the effectiveness of the planned educational system. Besides the widening of the gap between student population growth and the growth of the national economy, Fassil (1990) stated that "the working conditions of teachers, the reorganisation of the education sector to meet the new demands place[d] upon it, the question of the quality of education (and) the problem of wastage remained unanswered." Besides, it can be argued that the educational system neither accommodated nor responded to the glaring realities of the socio-cultural and linguistic diversities in the country. The large classes, characteristic of many schools at all levels, could not provide

[1]The currency in Ethiopia. Eth. birr 2.07 was officially equivalent to US $1.00.

effective learning exposure appropriate to each individual learner. The highly centralized system took the promotion of the ideology in the schools as a priority. Despite these, a number of researchers attribute the crisis in the present educational system, among other things, to the fact that the medium of instruction is English.

2.3 English Language Teaching and Education in Ethiopia

As mentioned in section 2.1, the imperial government was obliged to introduce a Western type modern educational system. It also adopted the English language as a medium of instruction. In the 1947/8 Elementary English Curriculum, it is stated that teaching English is essential because foreign teachers all speak English, textbooks for all subjects (except Amharic) are only available in English, for the professions, the first step is to pass an examination, and further reading can be done in English (Tesfaye and Taylor 1976:382).

It is to be noted that the Imperial Ethiopian Government sought help from the British Council in 1942 "to set up institutes for teaching English, to provide a library of English books and periodicals, and to procure English textbooks for schools" (Teshome 1979). As indicated above, English was adopted as a language of instruction in Ethiopian schools in 1944. The British Council helped in getting teaching materials and opening evening classes for teaching English. The teaching of English was mostly handled by Indian teachers and, later for a few years, by American Peace Corps Volunteers. Teacher training institutes were also founded to train Ethiopians to teach in these schools. But their training was not specifically to teach any subject.

In the 1947/8 Elementary English Curriculum, it is stated that the aims of teaching English, in the order given, included (a) reading and understanding, (b) hearing and understanding, (c) speaking the language fluently and correctly, (d) writing correctly and clearly. It is reported that the former two are fairly easy to teach, but the latter two are difficult. In other words,"for the teacher, reading can be very easy, and oral English very difficult, but with the latter the 'child will learn twice as much.' Thus 'if you wish your pupils to learn English, you must teach them to speak it' (Tesfaye and Taylor 1976:382).

This reflects the contemporary view of English language teaching methodology - the preference of the spoken to the written. In 1967, Rogers mentioned the following as the basic problems in English language teaching in the country: first, reading aloud was one of the commonest English lessons in every grade; second, Indian teachers were not introduced either to the ELT problems or to modern TESL methods; third, the inconsistency in when to introduce English teaching (despite the Ministry's policy in 1967 that English should be used from grade 3 onwards, he says it began in grade 1, or 2 or 3 in different schools in the country). The reports of the Curriculum-ESLCE[2] seminar of 1967 supported the above points. As a solution to the problems of teaching English in the country, the seminar recommended "an oral approach to language, more extensive drill of basic structures and oral practice prior to writing - in the early grades" (Madsen 1968:4).

In a conference on secondary education in Ethiopia held on 1-3 May 1962, it was recommended that the teaching of English be delayed until grade 3 because it was felt that the burden of having to learn a foreign language for young children at an early age was too much. It was also recommended that "audio-visual methods of teaching should take the place of the literal-grammar translation method. Language should be taught in the order: listen, speak, read, write" because, it was felt, "this was the way the mother tongue was acquired" (Tesfaye and Taylor 1976:389). The 1963/4 Secondary English Curriculum dictated that the general aims and purpose of all English teaching was, among others, to increase the proficiency and accuracy in spoken and written English, to increase fluency in speech and reading, to improve pronunciation and intonation, and to introduce students to good English literature (392). No mention was made regarding the use of the language for academic purposes or adopting an approach to suit the basic linguistic needs of the learners as individuals preferring different styles and strategies of learning the language, with different background knowledge and learning needs. The emphasis on the spoken testifies the contemporary approach to language teaching and reading was considered as having secondary importance (section 3.2 Chapter 3).

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[2]The Ethiopian School Leaving Certificate Examination.

Asfaw and Murison-Bowie (1976:415) listed a series of books widely distributed and recommended by the Ministry of Education and Fine Arts before the introduction of a series of English textbooks popularly known as the *New Oxford English Course Ethiopia* (*NOEC Ethiopia*) - an adaptation of the *New Oxford English Course East Africa*. The books recommended for elementary school curriculum included *The New Method Readers, Primer, Reader*s 1-7 by West (1947), *New Method Composition* Books 1-5 by West (1940), *Self-help Exercises* Books 1-3 by French (1938), *A Pictorial English Grammar* Parts I and II by French (1949), *Fundamental English* by Ballard (1943), *An English Highway* Stage I by Moon and McKay (1938), *Simplified English Grammar* by Ripping (1935) and *Learning To Speak By Speaking* Section 4 by West (1937). The list for the secondary school curriculum included *The New Method Readers* Reader 5 and Companion, Reader 6 and 7 by West (1947), *Fundamental English*, Second Series I-IV by Ballard (1943), *Through Speech To Writing* I and II by Glassey (1947), *The Groundwork of English Composition* by Glassey (1940), *The Groundwork of Precis* by Glassey (1938), *Outline of English Grammar* by Nesfield (1950), and *Composition Exercises in Elementary English* by Hornby (1934). No information was available as to the range of use of any one of these titles. However, it is understood that many schools both in the capital and in the provinces used most of these books to teach English.

The work on the adaptation of *The New Oxford English Course (NOEC Uganda)* to *The New Oxford English Course Ethiopia* started after 1964 and teachers of English were given an orientation on handling the series in January 1966. It is noted that Book I of the *NOEC Ethiopia* was introduced into the elementary schools in September 1966 (Norrish 1970). Madsen (1969) recommended the use of *The NOEC Ethiopia* series by describing *The NOEC Ethiopia* Book 3, as soon as it came out for use. He stated that the series was appropriately developed for use in the teaching of English language in Ethiopia, and this book in particular was suitable because "contains much original material and its reading passages and exercises are based on sound analysis of the structures and vocabulary contained in *NOEC* Books 1 and 2, which it thoroughly consolidates."

With the introduction of *The NOEC Ethiopia* to the primary school (for grades 3 to 8 *NOEC Ethiopia* Books 1 to 6), *Ethiopian Folk Tales* by Bachrach (1967) was used in

Grade 7 until it was replaced by *NOEC Ethiopia* Book 5. The secondary schools used *English For Today* Book 3 'The Way We Live' by The National Council of Teachers of English (for Grade 9); *English For Today* Book 4 'Our Changing World' by the National Council of Teachers of English (for Grade 10); and *College English* Volumes I and II by Rogers, Tan and Hutton (1967) (for Grade 11 and Grade 12 respectively). The Ministry of Education and Fine Arts also recommended the use of the following textbooks in the specified grades: ***The Big Tall Tree and Other Rhymes*** by Black, and ***Rhymes for Speech and Action*** Book 1 by Aickman (for Grades 3 and 4); *Thorndike-Barnhart Beginner's Dictionary* by Thorndike and Barnhart (for Grade 7); *Thorndike-Barnhart Junior Dictionary* by Thorndike and Barnhart (1952) (for Grade 8); *Living English Structure* by Allen (1959) and *The Advanced Learners Dictionary of Current English* by Hornby, Gatenby and Wakefield (1963) (for Grades 9 to 12) (Asfaw and Murison-Bowie 1976:418*f*).

In 1969 it was planned that the English textbooks used in the secondary schools (Grades 9 to 12) would be replaced by a new series - *The Oxford English Course for Ethiopia*[3] - popularly known as the *Contact* series edited by Murison-Bowie. Murison-Bowie (1976:427*ff*) expounds the contemporary theories that informed the methodology used to develop the books. He also mentioned the educational context these books were designed to operate. The first book in the series was planned to be used as of the 1970/1 academic year and the remaining were to follow. In contrast to the 1967 *Curriculum-ESLCE* seminar recommendations mentioned above, the editor of the *Contact* series claims that

> the series is being written against a background of research into the overall aim of teaching English in Ethiopia at this level, into the role of the textbook in the classroom, and into the relevance to language teaching of developments in linguistics and related sciences. An attempt is being made to produce a course which will require minimum reliance upon the teachers (whose qualifications are uneven and who rarely stay long in their posts) in equipping the pupils with the

[3]This series is the first of its kind to be produced in the country to teach English in the Ethiopian secondary schools. According to Murison-Bowie (1976), the series was written to help students learn the language independently or with less teacher dependence and to provide students with substantial amount of linguistic input and facilitate the learning of the language. The series had the following components: listening (provided in the teacher's handbook), reading comprehension, meaning (vocabulary development section), structure and usage (grammatical explanations accompanied by exercises), and composition (writing exercises).

> skills required of them at the end of their secondary education. These requirements are seen to centre upon the linguistic skills of being able to understand fairly sophisticated spoken and written English and of being able to speak and write fairly simple English, and on the educational skill of being able to appreciate more than one point of view, and assess a situation or opinion when presented with *conflicting* [sic] evidence.

The books were the first of their kind specifically designed to teach English in the Ethiopian secondary schools. However, before their effects on developing students' linguistic ability could be reliably assessed, they were replaced in 1979 by a new series - *English for New Ethiopia (ENE).* The new series was developed by the Curriculum Division of the Ministry of Education and was supposedly based on the following features: the content expressed in the language (English) to be primarily ideological or political to promote political education, revolutionary literature and scientific English; the 'integrated' approach to be used as a methodology; and the selection of linguistic items to be based on suitability, usefulness of content in the promotion of the ideology (Curriculum Division 1979:5*f*). The books were produced in haste to fill the gap created as a result of the Ministry's decision to scrap all materials and textbooks, including the *Contact* series, that were believed not to be reflecting the contemporary ideology.

It might be claimed that this step was taken to minimize the role of the English language teaching in the country (Stoddart 1986) because it was generally believed that most students "find it difficult to think in abstract terms, to generalize concepts and to comprehend things and phenomena in English" (Curriculum Division 1979:3). It could also be argued that the books followed the structuralist approach in an inconsistent way and they were too limited in scope and methodology to provide an adequate exposure to the English language in order to help students to develop their linguistic abilities. Most of the reading passages were too difficult to follow and many students did not read them at all. English classroom situations are clearly described by McNab (1987; 1989) and Stoddart (1986). The English teaching-learning situation in most government schools has deteriorated so much that hardly few benefit from it. Last (1983:ii) believes that the condition is created

> by the strenuous efforts made for quantitative development in response to political

> and social demands for the universalisation of access to education and the democratisation of educational services (that) have limited the volume of resources which could be applied to upgrading the environment of education. These shortages of quality and even of essential inputs have obviously placed limits on the experiences which can be offered in the nation's schools.

Thus, most of Addis Ababa University's first year entrants do not have the required knowledge of the English language, or the knowledge of reading in English for academic purposes. It is believed that Addis Ababa University cannot remain unaffected by the changing situations in schools. The changes have affected both the educational system and the nature and quality of English Language teaching in the university as well.

2.4 The Addis Ababa University

Addis Ababa University started as the University College of Addis Ababa in 1951 as the first institution of higher learning in the country to promote the educational objectives of the imperial government mentioned in section 2.1 and section 2.2 above. In 1961, it became a university with a charter of its own and was renamed as the Haile Selassie I University. Haile Selassie I University incorporated the Colleges of Engineering (established in 1953), Building (established with Swedish help in 1954), Agricultural and Mechanical Arts (established in 1954 with *USAID* support), Public Health of Gondar (established in 1954 with the support of *WHO, UNICEF and USAID*), and Theology (established in 1960) (Markakis 1974:151*f*; Girma 1992; Seyoum 1987:57*ff*; Abebe 1987:4*f*).

It is indicated that the growth of the university student to staff ratio is relatively faster. The University College of Addis Ababa started with only 71 students and nine teaching staff. In 1961, the Haile Selassie I University started with 900 students and 100 academic staff. In 1983/84 academic year Addis Ababa University had about 10,398 students and about 899 academic staff (Seyoum 1987:58).

When the university was established, besides meeting the skilled manpower needs of the country, it was planned first and foremost to be Ethiopian in its purpose and content and

it was to give special emphasis to the Ethiopian tradition (Seyoum 1987:56). However, it is stated that there was a profound American influence in all spheres. Most of the founders and key decision-makers in the university were American expatriates. Until 1955 there was no Ethiopian academic staff member. Consequently, "at the inception of the Ethiopian national university, the concerns, apprehensions, and uncertainty expressed by members of the national community concentrated on several factors: that it was a secular institution, modelled on foreign ideas and staffed by foreigners, and offered instruction primarily in English" (Teshome 1990:153).

In response to this, the Addis Ababa University increased its Ethiopian academic staff in a relatively short period of time. In 1964, out of the 264 academic staff members, 34 per cent were Ethiopians. After the change of government, in 1975 it was 68 per cent and in 1983/84 academic year out of the 899 academic staff members, 79 per cent were Ethiopians. At present the university has expanded not only in the number of students and academic staff members but also in the number of faculties, departments and other services.

Broadly speaking, most researchers mention three fundamental weaknesses of higher education in the country prior to 1974. Firstly, there was no co-ordination among the various institutions of higher learning. Due to the duplication of programmes and the inefficient utilisation of available facilities, there was a waste of human and material resources. Secondly, there was a critical disparity between the country's manpower needs and the educational programmes offered in institutions of higher learning. It was alleged that much emphasis was given to the humanities and the arts. In fact this was radically reversed in the post 1974 period and, as a result there were more students in the sciences than in the arts although such a reversal might not have satisfied the basic manpower needs of the country. Lastly, there was a great disparity among the regions' and between the sexes' representation in the student population of the institutes of higher learning. The students coming from Addis Ababa, Shoa, Eritrea and Hararghe accounted for more than 70 per cent of the student population. This is also corroborated by the findings of this research in that a high percentage of the student population in the first year programme of the 1990/91 academic year came from urban areas and the majority reported that their

mother tongue was Amharic (section 4.32 Chapter 4). Moreover, there was a higher percentage of male population than female population (Girma 1992:109-125). Apparently, most of these constraints and others spilled over to the post 1974 period.

It has been pointed out that in post 1974 period the university experienced a high degree of expansion unprecedented in its thirty years history. However, besides the legacies of the past, as mentioned above, the university was constrained by various factors to live up to its ideals as an institution of higher learning - as a research and teaching institution. The task of the university was mainly limited to teaching or the *imparting of knowledge* and one often heard the usual appeal for staff to conduct research. What Abebe (1987:10) stated as the weaknesses of higher education prior to the 1974 period, thus confirming what Girma (1992) asserted, that is, the inability of the institution to orientate its curriculum to the Ethiopian situation, the inability of the institution to undertake curriculum revision and modernization - is mostly true during the post 1974 period. To these constraining factors, the following prominent features could be added: the expansion of the university beyond all its limits, including budgetary, and the political situations in the country and their serious repercussions in the university.

2.41 Curriculum Orientation

As indicated above (section 2.2) the rationale for the establishment of the university by the imperial government was to promote the creation of a modern state and the training of skilled manpower to help in this endeavour. However, the founders of the university seemed to be unaware of the conditions of the country and its basic needs. They designed the syllabuses for their respective courses according to their experiences in their respective countries' universities. The colleges which the Haile Selassie I University constituted followed the dominant ideas and view-points of their founding lecturers and administrators, for instance, the College of Business Administration and the College of Agriculture followed the American system, the Faculty of Medicine followed the British system (Markakis 1974). The letter grading and semester systems were American introductions. In fact, Aklilu, the second Ethiopian president of the Haile Selassie I University, stated that

> these colleges which existed and developed separately and independently of each other, each with its own history, its own purpose, its forms and style of organisation and administration were ... the legacies of the newly created university (quoted in Abebe 1987:5).

The colleges in the Haile Sellasie I University did not only fail to develop a uniform curriculum among themselves but they were also unable to relate the curriculum to the Ethiopian situation.

Abebe (1987:10) stated that the revised (1976) aims of the university shifted from the traditional emphasis on producing elites to the training of conscientious citizens who could make significant contributions to the development of the country. However, it cannot be denied that the university's universal objectives of the pursuit of knowledge and the search for truth were squashed under the military government's persistent attempts to employ the university to facilitate the centralization and consolidation of political power and the dissemination of the Marxist-Leninist ideology. Incidentally, it is claimed that an African university is meant to advance science and technology, impart knowledge by teaching, advance knowledge through research; to study, preserve and develop the Ethiopian cultural heritage; to identify itself with the society and to satisfy the man-power needs of the country (Abebe 1987; and for similar objectives of regional universities in Africa, Eastern and Southern African Universities Research Programme 1987:15-18). It is asserted that in order to fulfil these objectives new departments and institutions were opened, such as the School of Graduate Studies, the Institute of Language Studies, the reorganization of the College of Social Sciences, and others (see Abebe 1987 for a complete description of the reorganisation); however, all these introductions were without any significant budgetary increase. To what extent the above mentioned objectives were realised after the founding of new colleges and departments needs further research, but the problem of course duplication and irrelevance to specific needs still prevails. No attention has been given to the quality and content of education.

2.42 Curriculum revision and modernisation

Besides the problem mentioned in section 2.41 above, in the post 1974 Addis Ababa

University, some courses have not been updated to suit to changing needs or changes in the international academic world. Some courses might have phased out, but the courses that replaced them were as irrelevant. There were instances where courses overlapped, despite the course numbers they bore, and the use of outdated course books was not uncommon. However, this is not to imply that there was not any attempt made at curriculum revision and modernisation. It is to state that the serious social and political exigencies in the country made it difficult for the university to revise and develop its curriculum (section 2.44 below). In simple terms, the endeavours were constrained by administrative and financial constraints.

2.43 The expansion of the University

Before 1974 the university was dependent on Western help for teaching staff, materials and equipment (Markakis 1974). The military government discouraged such dependence and the university was made to operate using the budget allocated to it by the Central Treasury. Though the move was worthwhile, the financial assistance was by no means sufficient to run a large modern university. For instance, Seyoum (1987:68) states that in 1985 the university's annual budget was 37.4 million *birr*. But the university had to operate on a deficit of 5.3 million *birr* despite the fact that it was required to admit an increasing number of students every year. It is apparent that such serious financial constraints discourage any plans for improving the teaching and learning process in the university.

2.44 The political situation in the country

The political situation that prevailed after the 1974 revolution affected the university in many respects. The university could not remain immune to a myriad of political activities and moves by the government in its attempts to establish itself and to employ education for promoting ideological and political purposes. The university was closed down for two years as soon as the *Derge* assumed power and staff and students alike were sent out on a campaign called *Development Through Co-operation.* Most of the experienced senior staff, both expatriate and Ethiopian, fled the country after the military takeover. Some

staff members left the university to assume posts in the government. New staff from abroad could not be recruited because of threatening political situation and the financial constraints of the university. This created an acute staff shortage (Seyoum 1987:63).

To offset this, the university started to depend on part-time employees and young inexperienced Ethiopian staff (inexperienced in teaching and research undertaking). The inexperienced junior staff was forced to work in a situation where there were no course books for most of the courses and where there was an acute shortage of reference materials. The few periodicals the university library used to receive were discontinued due to budgetary problems. The rare research grants and scholarships (usually made available mainly through personal contacts with external universities and organisations) were made available to few staff members. However, the predominantly junior staff had to cope with the unprecedented increase in student population and experience the inevitable decline in the quality of education in the university.

In 1983/84 academic year, for instance, 61 per cent of the academic staff were juniors. This increase in 'Ethiopianization' did not, however, help decrease the staff-student ratio. It was as high as one instructor to thirty nine students for 1985 while similar universities in East Africa were reported to have one instructor to seven students (Abebe 1987:14).

College/ Faculty	Full-time equivalent	Staff lecturer and above	Staff/student ratio
Science	4344	102	1:43
Law	219	8	1:27
Technology	1031	42	1:25
Veterinary	149	16	1:09
Social Sc.*	3048	57	1:54
Awassa	867	19	1:46
Education	1326	26	1:51
Bahir Dar	1014	28	1:36
I. L. S.	1325	52	1:26

*excluding history

Table 2.3 Staff-student ratio in Addis Ababa University in 1985

Source: AAU Planning Office, 1985

Table 2.3, above, indicates that in 1985 the College of Social Sciences had the highest staff-student ratio, that is, one instructor to fifty four students. It was followed by Awassa Agricultural College. In that year, the Veterinary Science in Debre Zeit had the lowest ratio. The Institute of Language Studies had the ratio of one instructor to twenty six students for that year. However, it should be noted that the staff-student ratio in the Addis Ababa University is lower than in most other colleges in the country. For 1988-89 academic year, the highest staff-student ratio was one instructor to fifty one students in the Junior College of Commerce. It may be argued that this ratio is incredibly high for a college. Table 2.4 below indicates that Addis Ababa University is the last but one in the list with the lowest staff-student ratio. It is indicated in Table 2.4 that the Jimma Junior College of Agriculture is second to the Junior College of Commerce in the highest staff-student ratio. This indicates that the overriding feature in most of these colleges is the fact that the large classes discourage teachers to devote their time to improve the quality of their teaching and undertake research (Seyoum 1987).

Institution	staff/student ratio
Addis Ababa University	1:16.5
Asmara University	1:20.5
Alemaya University	1:19.1
Ambo J.C. of Agriculture	1:16.3
Jimma J.C. of Agriculture	1:31.0
Kotobe College of Teacher Education	1:25.7
Junior College of Commerce	1:51.0

Table 2.4 Staff-student ratio in Higher Education in 1988/89 A.Y.

Source: Higher Education Main Department 1990 *Statistics on Higher Education*

Another problem caused by the above factors is the attrition rate. Despite the fact that access to Addis Ababa University has gradually become more difficult than ever before, due to the high grade level requirements in the *ESLCE*, the national school leaving examination, the attrition rate in the university has steadily increased.

Year	Attrition (per cent)
1969-70	14.4
1970-71	10.0
1981-82	16.4
1983-84	18.9

Table 2.5 Attrition rate in Addis Ababa University

Source: Addis Ababa University Planning Office 1985

Table 2.5 indicates that the attrition rate increased by about 19 per cent in 1983/84 academic year. For 1988/89, according to Higher Education Main Department report, the degree programmes in Addis Ababa University with the highest/lowest attrition rates were the Department of Educational Psychology (27.6 per cent), History (27.1 per cent), School of Pharmacy (23.3 per cent), Faculty of Medicine (0.2 per cent), Bahir Dar (1.0 per cent) and Veterinary Science (1.9 per cent). Seyoum (1987) states that in 1983/4, out of the 38,645 students who sat for the *ESLCE* only 8,850 passed and out of these only 4,378 could meet the university's requirements for access. Out of the 4,378 students, 31.6 per cent came from Addis Ababa, 15.2 per cent from Shoa, 8.7 per cent from Harar, 6.5 per cent from Gondar, and 5.7 per cent from Tigray (see section 4.32 Chapter 4 for the current disparity in sex, region, etc of university entrants). Table 2.6 gives a full picture of the situation. The slight differences in figures between the above mentioned by Seyoum (1987) and those in Table 2.6 below are more or less insignificant.

year	students enrolled for ESLCE	students admitted	adm/enr ratio
1982/83	36042	6460	0.18
1983/84	38004	6675	0.18
1984/85	40363	8276	0.21
1985/86	40223	6411	0.16
1986/87	41468	6115	0.15
1987/88	39511	5744	0.15
total	235611	39981	0.17

Table 2.6 Ratio of regular students admitted to institutions of higher learning

Source: Ministry of Education 1988

In an attempt to phase out old courses and produce as many graduates as the country was felt to need, in 1978/79 academic year, Addis Ababa University made a series of reorganisations in course offerings and it introduced the term system, despite staff objections, mainly to reduce the number of years required for the undergraduate programme and to train as many students as possible within a short period of time. Marxist-Leninist philosophy and political economy were introduced to the first year course offering list. Staff were also obliged to undergo reorientation programmes intended to make them familiar with the principles of Marxism-Leninism so that they could promote the philosophy in their teaching. The Revolutionary Ethiopia Youth Association was made responsible for the perpetuation of the contemporary ideology among university students. Political discussion forums for staff were held on Mondays and attendance was compulsory. In 1985 all staff and students were sent out to help build huts for peasant settlers in Gojjam and Illubabor regions. Lessons had to be discontinued for one semester. Besides these, various committees proliferated and staff were supposed to be involved (Abebe 1987) as this became one of the basic criteria for promotion. Classes grew larger as budgetary problems discouraged staff development and training.

Suddenly, the above prescriptions - the term system, the weekly political discussion sessions, and the offering of Marxist-Leninist philosophy and political economy - were abandoned, as fast as they were introduced, in 1991 when the policy of the government changed. Again, with the usual rush, in 1990/91 academic year students were sent out for military training in camps to defend "the unity and territorial integrity of the motherland." The long-term effect of such hasty implementations of government policy in Addis Ababa University, which claims to be a centre of *academia*, is yet to be seen. However, such a series of hasty and unwarranted changes only helped to deplete the already meagre budget allocated to the university (for the effects of this situation on the present research see section 1.3 Chapter 1 above, section 4.1 Chapter 4 below). It is understandable that these moves have seriously affected the quality of education offered by the university since the late 1970's.

2.5 English Language Teaching in the Addis Ababa University

When modern education in imperial Ethiopia took shape, the ultimate aim of the educational establishment was fundamentally to enhance the creation of a modern state. This was also the guiding principle of education when the University College of Addis Ababa was inaugurated in 1951. The University College of Addis Ababa took English as a medium of instruction because, among other things, the language was accepted as the *de facto* language of education in the country; the founders were expatriate scholars, and the curriculum, syllabus, teaching materials were mainly imported from Britain and, later, from America (Teshome 1990; Girma 1992).

Apparently, a university operating in the English language medium would require of its students a high level of linguistic competence to study in that language (section 1.1 Chapter 1 above). At the initial stages, this seemed not to pose a problem. However, as it has been indicated above (section 2.3) in the mid-sixties, as the student population started to increase, there were complaints about students' poor background knowledge in English (Rogers 1967, 1969). It was felt that the major reasons for students' poor competence in the English language was caused by poor teacher qualifications, lack of appropriate teaching materials, and backward teaching methodology in high schools (Kehoe 1964). In 1967, Lee (1968) studied the reading comprehension ability of students and the readability of their textbooks. His subjects were drawn from grade nine and first year university. He used the Davis Test or Metropolitan Test (test designed for American children) and the Flesch readability formula to assess reading comprehension and the readability of selected course books respectively. His results indicated that grade nine students had a reading ability of middle of primary school and their textbooks had a readability index ranging from lower primary level up to and university level. The reading ability of first year students was of lower secondary school and their textbooks' readability ranged from last year of secondary school up to the upper levels of university. Langmuir (1968; 1971) found similar results regarding the reading abilities of university students.

It is to be noted that with the changes mentioned in section 2.3 above, the *ESLCE*, which

remained the sole requirement for university entrance, consisted of only one English language examination paper, as of 1968, and the paper emphasised the knowledge of the grammar of the language. It was recommended that the *ESLCE* English paper be changed from the subjective to objective type and the literature part was to be suspended "until it could be decided what literature to teach, whether to stress reading or literature, how to test this material, how to secure adequate texts ..." (Madsen 1968; 1976:489). Along with this, the emphasis on reading ability in this national examination gradually diminished. However, this move did not ameliorate the seriousness of students' linguistic problem. Students joining the university were found to be linguistically incompetent to cope with their academic studies, and the incompetence became more glaring from year to year.

The fundamental aim for the introduction of service English courses at the university level was to help students develop their English language ability so that they could study effectively and operate as university students. Initially, there were no standard textbooks for the courses that were designed to be given in three or four semesters. The first set of textbooks produced were the two volumes of *College English* by Rogers, Tan and Hutton (1967). The course books and the courses were meant to be temporary and remedial, only to last two to three years. Jarvis (1969) expresses the contemporary recommended language teaching methodology in assessing the two volumes. He asserts

> examples of vocabulary and structures, especially those known to cause difficulty to the Ethiopian student, are provided in context and are then drilled extensively. Emphasis is placed on fluent oral response, and intensive controlled writing practice is included.

Asfaw and Murison-Bowie (1976:426), however, argue that "on the whole, the books make wide use of available techniques ... The books' treatment of grammar, however, fails to develop the learner's ability in this field systematically. Such explanations as are given tend to be incomplete and confusing, and the amount of drilling and exercising of grammatical points is unlikely to be sufficient for the remedy of common errors."

The remedial work was not phased out. In 1969, the two textbooks were made available to senior high schools in the hope that the university English language service courses

would phase out. For some time, the service English courses were offered without any standard course books. Instructors used a set of hand-outs (Asfaw and Murison-Bowie 1976:428-9). In 1978 the *Freshman Intensive Remote English*, or *FIRE*, by Mortimer, was introduced. It had separate volumes for arts and science students. The volumes had an ESP orientation and consisted of a teacher's book and students' workbooks, but for various reasons, *FIRE* was dropped and the courses were again taught without any course books until 1985 when the present two volumes of the Freshman English courses - Freshman English 101A and Freshman English 101B - were produced mostly based on the hand-outs that were in use.

Each course book consists of six units. Each unit has a reading comprehension passage, followed by a few multiple choice and wh-questions on the reading passage. The second section consists of vocabulary exercises, mostly fill-in type. The third section provides the definition of a selected grammatical item, such as the simple present tense followed by exercises mostly on sentence-level, like providing the appropriate form of a given verb, similar to those which appear in *Living English Structure* by Allen (1963). The last section is on writing.

In broad terms, the course books have proved to be inappropriate in their form of presentation and deficient in their content. The reading passages are mostly too long and uninteresting. The questions on the reading comprehension mostly focus on the students' ability to recall and can easily be answered either without reading the passage in question or looking back at the body of the passage. The exercises on vocabulary development do not fare better than those on reading. They are mostly fill-in types. Typically, a list of vocabulary items taken from the previous reading passage is provided with isolated sentences with blanks. Students are supposed to identify the word that could fill the gap in a given sentence. Similarly, the section on grammar takes a certain grammatical notion, like the passive, provides a definition with accompanying sentences to demonstrate the point of discussion. The exercises on the structure and usage part mostly encourage the mere study of verb forms. This section is basically structural and there is no attempt at least to exploit grammar to generate some meaningful discourse (Widdowson 1986).

Most of these points were mentioned by Freshman English instructors in a questionnaire administered to appraise the effectiveness of the course books (Gebremedhin 1988).

The causes for the ineffectiveness of the service English courses do not only lie in the course books. Major problems on a macro-level have been discussed in detail above. It can also be stated that besides the nature and content of the service English course books, (which is fundamentally more devoted to usage than use), there are problems in the design of the syllabus and the process of evaluation. The courses are no longer claimed as temporary that would soon phase out, but the general emphasis on grammar is apparently as prominent as before. In the introduction to the first volume, Freshman English 101A, it is stated that "the aim (of these courses) is to review and revise the ground rules of English structure and usage while at the same time extending the students' active and passive command of the language" (Conroy 1985:introduction to Freshman English 101A).

2.6 Research on service English courses in Addis Ababa University

There are now indications that the service English courses have not been effective in helping students to cope with the rigors of academic studies. It seems that the course objectives mentioned above are not informed by the general linguistic problems students face in their schools, and thus, it is unlikely that these courses could fulfil the expressed aims of the university mentioned in section 2.4 in Chapter 2 above.

In 1968 the English Department introduced two versions of the service English courses. One set, designed to be given in four semesters, two hours per week, was planned for students whose grades in the *ESLCE* English Language Examination was ***C*** and below. The other set, designed to be given in three semesters - three hours a week, was given to students whose grades in English in the national examination was ***B*** and above. The assumption was that those who were good at English could be given more advanced language tasks. Still, the other group, though considered weak, could start from easier tasks and, through the materials, could improve their ability in the language and build up to the same linguistic level as the other group. However, the follow-up of the results of

the study indicated that there was not a significant difference in linguistic improvement between the two groups (Mosback 1977).

Morris (1982) felt that the service English courses could be improved if they were based on the actual assessment of the academic needs of the university students. She made a survey of all the academic needs of the students using Munby's *Communicative Syllabus Design* (1978) model. Her findings indicated that the demands for the receptive skills were higher than the demands for the productive skills. Her study, however, did not dwell on the general background knowledge students had when they joined the university, what they lacked and what they wanted to learn in specific terms.

Hailom (1982) designed an experiment to study the effectiveness of the communicative approach in teaching English conditional sentences. He stated that there was a marked improvement in the results of the experimental group that used the communicative approach to study English conditional sentences. Similarly, Gebremedhin (1984) undertook an experimental study to examine the effectiveness of two second language teaching approaches - the Language Acquisition and the Conscious Rule Learning Approaches. While the former emphasised the use of language learning activities to acquire the language, the latter was basically devoted to structural rule explanation (or usage) and the learning of these rules by students[4]. The comparative study revealed that students who followed the Language Acquisition Approach performed better than those who followed the Conscious Rule Learning Approach. It was indicated that the language learning activities promoted in the students the motivation for effective language learning. Haile Michael (1984) studied the effectiveness of the communicative approach in teaching reading in English to first year social science students. He undertook a comparative study of the traditional and communicative approaches in promoting effective reading. He concluded that students in the experimental group became better readers than those in the control group who followed the conventional method.

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[4]These ideas are expounded in greater detail in Krashen and Terrell 1983; Krashen 1981; Prabhu 1985, 1987; Johnson 1982; Brumfit 1984; and Widdowson 1990:144*ff*. As pointed out, the basis of the language teaching approach is that learners will acquire language effectively if they could be engaged in a series of activities that promote the use of the language and that would facilitate a supportive learning environment.

Tsegaye (1981) used the fog index and the cloze test to investigate the reading comprehension ability of Addis Ababa University first year students and the readability of their course books. The assumptions for the fog index formula for establishing the readability of a book rely on the assumption that a long sentence with three-syllable words is more difficult than a short sentence with few or no three-syllable words. The fog index of a sampled passage is established by dividing the number of words by the number of sentences in the passage and adding this to the number of three-syllable words occurring in the passage. The result is multiplied by 0.4 to yield the fog index of the selected passage. In short, the fog index of a selected passage is computed as follows (Alderson and Urquhart 1984:xxii):

$$\frac{\text{number of words}}{\text{number of sentences}} + \frac{\text{number of 3-syllable words}}{\text{number of words}} \times \frac{100}{1} \times 0.4$$

In other words, the fog index of a given book is established by adding the fog indices of all selected passages (usually of 100 words length) and dividing the sum by the number of the passages selected (Klare 1969; Gilliland 1972; see also section 3.2221 Chapter 3 for a general review of readability formulae). The result is interpreted as 12 and below as easy, 13-16, undergraduate and 16 and above as postgraduate.

Tsegaye found out that the social science first year students were on the *frustrational level* when tested on their geography textbook which, he reported, had a readability level of grade eleven (see section 5.222 and section 5.322 Chapter 5 for the results of the current study regarding the cloze tests on the geography course book). The Natural Science first year students were found on the *instructional level* of comprehension when tested on their chemistry course book which had a readability level of second year university (see Cripwell 1976 for the definition of the terms; section 3.2221 Chapter 3 below). He used the fifth word deletion for the cloze test.

Similarly, Mendida (1988) indicated that there was a gap between the actual reading ability and what was expected of the first year students in Bahir Dar Teachers' College. He used the cloze test and Fry's formula (1968) to establish his conclusions. Molla

(1987) assessed the reading speed of first year students and he claimed that they were slow readers.

In February 1988, the Office of the Freshman Programme of the College of Social Sciences reported that the first year social science students' performance in English was the lowest, followed by philosophy. It was added that students did well in statistics and economics followed by geography. Most dismissal cases had the grade of ***F*** in Freshman English. Figures were not released; however, this assertion was said to be supported by the number of students sitting for a supplemental examination in Freshman English and the complaints of most Freshman English instructors of having to do a lot of re-marking when they fail students in the course. Similarly, most Freshman English instructors (Gebremedhin 1988) reported that the standard course books for the service courses were inadequate and inappropriate. Most instructors mentioned the major points raised above about the service English course books to justify their comments.

A base-line study for this research (Gebremedhin 1988) was conducted in the second semester of 1987/88 academic year to find out whether students in the third year of the College of Social Sciences had benefitted much from the service English courses in their use of the reading strategies and their ability to understand their course books. The students were third year history, management and sociology majors. These were selected because it was assumed that students in these three departments were expected to do a lot of reading and writing both in simple and complex prose. Moreover, these students had completed their *dosage* of the service English courses required of all Addis Ababa University students. The students were given texts selected from their respective course books (see ***Appendix 1.1***) and they were asked to make short notes as they would presumably do for their courses. The original plan was then to ask students to reconstruct their notes to the original and to compare any deficiencies in decoding. However, this plan was abandoned because most students did not write short notes - such as phrases or the like. They copied the original material in chunks (***Appendix 1.2***). Thus it was planned to assess their notes from the point of view of their ability to *feel* text organisation, distinguish between main points and supporting details, extract important

ideas for study and further reference, and to transcode information in a suitable and economical way.

In broad terms, the notes (*Appendix 1.2*) seem to indicate that most of the students are poor readers. Most students seem to read word by word. Their notes suggest that: firstly, most students, even though they are senior students, are not aware of the common reading strategies; secondly, they are mostly poor bottom-up processors (section 3.2222 and section 3.2223 Chapter 3 below), they are not able to see the distinction between the main points and supporting details, the author's point of view or flow of ideas (specially the history and sociology students); thirdly, they are poor in their English; and finally, they seem to lack the confidence in their ability to operate in their own English.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the basis of the Ethiopian educational system since 1941 with special emphasis devoted to the role of the English language as a medium of instruction. It has been pointed out that the preliminary aim of the Ethiopian modern educational system was to facilitate the process of centralisation and modernisation (Markakis 1974). While the imperial government promoted an elitist type of education to produce skilled manpower for its bureaucracy, the military government underscored mass education to perpetuate the Marxist-Leninist ideology (Sjostrom and Sjostrom 1983; Schwab 1985).

As has been pointed out, the imperial educational system was based on an imported curriculum that ostensibly embodied Western value systems and priorities (Trudeau 1967; Teshome 1979; 1990; Fassil 1990; Girma 1992). This entailed the dependence to a large extent on expatriate staff and imported teaching materials which taxed the country's revenue and curtailed the government's ability to open more schools to reach the rural population in all parts of the country. The educational system featured conspicuous unevenness in urban/rural, regional and sex representations accompanied by an acute shortage of teaching personnel and increasing student attrition rate. Education was highly centralised and it was aimed at accentuating the so-called 'traditional pattern of assimilation' - through the Orthodox Church and the Amharic language (Markakis 1974).

However, as has been pointed out by researchers, its relevance to the basic needs of the Ethiopian population was questionable because it promoted a 'foreign' value system and it disregarded the diverse socio-cultural and linguistic realities of the country - the fundamental basis for what the students bring with them when they join the educational establishment.

As it has been indicated above, the educational policy had a strong bearing on the classroom situation. The teachers represented the authority and their task was to promulgate the 'desired' value system and students were supposed to accept this without questioning. All decisions regarding educational policy and implementation were basically top-down - and although most teacher-student related problems were not addressed, general educational policy decisions were made 'for' them. The general educational objective of producing skilled man-power for the bureaucracy gradually became not tuned to the fundamental needs of the country as the educational establishment was not effective in bringing about the much needed socio-political and economic changes in the day-to-day activities of the majority of the society that remained relatively traditional and illiterate. Gradually, it became evident that the country's backward economy was unable to absorb school graduates (Gilks 1975).

The educational policy of the military government (since 1974) was basically similar to its predecessor's. The apparent difference seems to lie on the less reliance on expatriate staff and imported teaching materials though these were by no means satisfied from local sources. Education was meant to be used as a tool for enhancing production, encouraging scientific research and promoting the political ideology (Last 1983; Schwab 1985). As Hoerr (cited in McNab 1987:12) states "the country now finds that the internationally mixed educational model which it imported is (a) of questionable socio-economic relevance to a largely rural agricultural population and (b) highly inequitable in terms of educational opportunity". This awareness, however, did not encourage the military government to introduce appropriate changes in the formal educational system.

Apparently, "Ethiopia follows a highly centralized system of education in which curricula are planned centrally and implemented throughout the country in a uniform manner. The

same textbooks, teachers' guides, etc., that are prescribed for particular grades are used all over the country" (British Council 1986). The government was only able to provide untrained or undertrained teachers with diminishing school supplies to very large classes where only half day schooling was available (Last 1983; McNab 1987; 1989). It seems paradoxical for the government in that on the one hand, it desired to employ education for accentuating central power by encouraging the use of Amharic as medium of instruction in all levels (Markakis 1974; Cooper 1976; McNab 1989) and thus reduce the apparent influence of the socio-cultural and linguistic diversities in all spheres of socio-economic and political activities, and on the other, it aimed at making education, or at least basic education, accessible for all and thus bearing the accountability for financing such a project, though without the capacity to shoulder it. As Abbott (1989:17) contends, "the government could, if it only put its mind to it, decentralize education sufficiently for all or most of its primary school children to start their schooling and become literate in their mother tongue."

Addis Ababa University, as an institution of higher learning in the country shares most of the drawbacks of the educational constraints mentioned above. Established in 1951 as the University College of Addis Ababa to give priority to the promotion of the "Ethiopian heritage as expressed in its history, languages, the arts and music, (and to meet) the needs of the country" (Seyoum 1987:56), Addis Ababa University has persistently endeavoured to perpetuate the Ethiopian culture and tradition as defined by the contemporary ideologies of the past two governments (Teshome 1990; Fassil 1990; Girma 1992). It has also tried to relate its academic programmes to the pertinent needs of the country. Such a task apparently necessitated the opening of new or the reorganization of old colleges and faculties, the revision and modernisation of its curricula, and the founding of new programmes (Abebe 1987). Nevertheless, these ventures coupled with the various educational problems at all levels (Last 1983) have precipitated the deterioration of the quality of the educational output (Abebe 1987). Operating with meagre budgetary resources, mostly inexperienced staff (both in research undertakings and pedagogy), inadequate and sometimes inappropriate teaching materials, and a high staff-student ratio, the university has reached a stage where it characteristically relies on the traditional lecture method - thus depriving students of a favourable learning environment - in its

undergraduate programmes (Abebe 1987; Seyoum 1987). This might have contributed to the increasing student attrition rate in the university (Table 2.5 section 2.44 above). Abebe (1987:15) contends that if "teaching as telling" is not abandoned and "a learning atmosphere which encourages students to accept some obligation for, and to take some initiative in self education" is assumed, the present trend is unlikely to be curbed.

One of the causes for the lowering in the quality of education in the country in general and the university in particular is alleged to be the use of English as a medium of instruction (Rogers 1967; 1989; Stoddart 1986; McNab 1989). It has been made clear that the establishment of modern educational system entailed the use of the English language as a medium of instruction because (a) the teachers were mostly expatriates, (b) the materials were written in English, and (c) the imperial government adopted English as a second language for its new bureaucracy (Tesfaye and Taylor 1976). Despite this, not much was done to improve the teaching of the English language in the country. Many English teachers complained about the gradual decline in the students' ability to use English for their studies (Kehoe 1964; Rogers 1967, 1969).

The earlier attempts to improve the teaching of English in the country focused on (a) delaying the introduction of English to the Ethiopian educational system (Rogers 1969), the writing of a new series of English language teaching materials - *The New Oxford English Course for Ethiopia* - informed by the contemporary approach to language teaching, that is, an oral approach with extensive drills in structures before writing at least in the earlier grades (Madsen 1968), and the use of objective tests and the dropping of the literature component of the English language examination paper of the ***ESLCE*** (Madsen 1976). However, even after about twenty years, as McNab (1989) and Stoddart (1986) indicate, the English medium schooling and English language teaching seem not to have improved much.

Similarly, in the university, researchers indicate that students find studying their academic courses in English very difficult. Mosback (1977) claims that the service English courses offered with the fundamental objective of helping students to study their courses in English are ineffective and a waste of resources. Others state that first year students'

ability to read and listen in English is very low (Tsegaye 1981; Hicks 1989). The service English courses have not been fundamentally improved since their introduction in the mid sixties. They are basically structuralist (Jarvis 1969; Conroy 1985). The course books for the service English courses are inappropriate in all aspects of language teaching methodology - no sections for developing the listening ability of students (though believed to be essential for their lectures), no explicit guidelines for the selection of the reading texts (and inappropriate exercises for developing students' reading ability in English for academic purposes), and no specific guidelines for the selection of the structural or lexical items that students are supposed to learn in order to succeed in the Freshman English final examination - which some students find more difficult to pass than their other academic courses (section 2.6).

The current study investigates a possible approach to developing students reading ability in English for academic purposes. It is based on the premise that by individualising reading (section 3.3 Chapter 3), students will not only improve their ability to read in English, but they will also be better equipped with the 'tools' of learning (section 1.1 Chapter 1) than ever before to cope with their academic studies in English (section 5.2 and 5.3 Chapter 5).

CHAPTER THREE

Review of related literature

3.1 Introduction

In the preceding chapter, it has been contended that despite the conspicuous socio-cultural and linguistic diversities precipitated in the course of the country's history (section 2.2 Chapter 2), modern education in Ethiopia, initially founded on an imported Western value system, was aimed at accentuating centralization and promoting modernization and development (Markakis 1974). However, the English medium schooling seems not to have succeeded in generating the anticipated development. Like in most developing countries, the shortcomings of the educational system, according to Hallak (cited in Abbott 1992:173-4) include, as has been mentioned above (section 2.3 Chapter 2), overcentralisation, overcrowding, under-funding, irrelevant curricula, teacher shortages, lack of textbooks, high pupil dropout rates, drab and ill-equipped buildings, teaching in two or even three shifts and similar problems (Last 1983 confirms this). Abbott (1992) suggests that English-medium schooling should be added to the list.

Undoubtedly, these conditions seriously affect the quality of education. They significantly limit the learning exposure of individual learners. And whether it is mother-tongue or English medium schooling, as long as these factors are prevailing it might not be appropriate to expect any positive educational changes. Similarly, a proposal for the substitution of the English medium schooling by mother-tongue schooling, as Abbott (1992) suggests, may not provide a fundamental solution to the apparent educational crisis in many countries. Thus, it might be wrong to rest the entire blame solely on the English medium schooling in most educational levels, for all the failures in the educational system (Kennedy 1989; Last 1983). Moreover, English language teaching in Ethiopia operated under the following serious constraints: limited competence in English of school teachers (not only subject teachers but also English language teachers), lack of appropriate training

of English language teachers, lack of English language teaching materials (both in quantity and quality) and overcrowded English language classes that operate on a half-day shift system. It is also suggested that the possibility of switching to Amharic medium schooling might have contributed to the weakening of English language teaching in the country (Tesfaye and Taylor 1976).

Asfaw and Murison-Bowie (1976:433) took the idea of a switch to Amharic from English as a medium of instruction cautiously and they questioned its plausibility by stating that

> there will be the conflicting political issues as well as the educational dilemmas of whether to use a 'national' language or an 'international' one for secondary education. The problems of documentation and wider communication that are already being faced in the Sudan with Arabic and in Tanzania with Swahili will have to be borne in mind in making a decision to use Amharic as a medium of instruction.

Similarly, Rubin (1984:5) warns that "a programme which changes the school language without changing the society is directed only at the symptom and not at the cause of the problem. Indeed, many remedial education programmes are ineffectual because of their isolation from real life situations." Incidentally, the real life situations of the large majority of the Ethiopian population have not been satisfactorily appraised and no significant attempts have been made to adapt the educational system to the fundamental needs of the people. Thus, all these factors have not only negatively affected the quality of education, but they have also seriously constrained the teaching of English in the country. It is paradoxical that on the one hand, it is officially sanctioned that English remains a medium of instruction in secondary and tertiary levels, and on the other hand, no significant attempt has been made to improve the quality of the teaching of English in schools despite the fact that English still remains the key language in the teaching and learning process both in secondary and tertiary levels.

It has been pointed out (section 1.1 Chapter 1; section 2.5 Chapter 2) the service English courses in Addis Ababa University were reinstated to help students make up for their English language deficiencies mostly caused by the factors mentioned above. However, current research (section 2.6 Chapter 2) indicates the ineffectiveness of these

courses in developing students' linguistic and reading competence. The remedial English language courses seem not to address the right questions (Ellis 1987), that is, how to relate the language courses to the every day life of the students and how to help them develop their background knowledge to pursue their academic courses in English. In light of the fact that students joining the university seem not to have adequate background knowledge - both schematic and systemic - and are expected to read academic texts in English, the service English courses offered in the university have failed to satisfy this felt need (section 2.6 and section 2.7, Chapter 2).

Reading in English for academic purposes is supposedly the major task of social science first year students, and possibly of all the students in the university. This is probably why reading has been allotted a major section in the service English course books. In fact, the implicit objective of the courses is to teach students to effectively read their textbooks in English. However, as indicated (section 1.1, Chapter 1; section 2.5 and section 2.6, Chapter 2), the reading parts in the service English courses are not appropriately designed, and hence, uninformed by current methods of developing effective reading for academic purposes, to promote the apparently dichotomous learning elements - the *analytic skill-getting* and the *experiential skill-using* (Allen, 1986:3, prefers to reject the dichotomy), or the micro-language learning and the macro-language use (Rivers 1983). They are too limited both in scope and approach to foster what Widdowson (1986:41) calls the *educationally required* (section 2.3 and section 2.6 Chapter 2) and the *pedagogically desirable*. It is admitted that it is not easy to create harmony between the two (what the students are supposed to learn according to the national curriculum, and how teachers should teach what is required). Different researchers recommend different approaches to language teaching (Widdowson 1983; Krashen and Terrell 1983; Prabhu 1985; Allen 1986; Dickinson 1987, to mention some).

This study endeavours to combine both - an approach to developing reading ability informed by the country's educational needs and drawbacks, and appropriate theoretical constructs of pedagogy. The main aim of the approach is not to look at the educational needs as discrete elements to qualify learning tasks but to reconcile current learning theories to bear on the process of developing learners' ability to read their academic

course books in English as successfully as they could. The approach highlights learners' contributions in the efforts to help them develop their ability to learn to read and to read to learn. Learning to read or reading to learn, as a purpose, is not considered in order to delimit or specify learning tasks in a form of discrete elements (such as structure, function, notion or skill, or whatever), but to help the learners to *experiment* with their learning strategies (through learner training) while developing their background knowledge or schema - as a prerequisite for learning to read and reading to learn (Smith 1982). As Grabe (1986) points out, the achievement of this background knowledge, or what he calls *critical mass of knowledge*, is a stage where a student stops learning to read and only reads to learn.

There are profound reasons for emphasizing reading in the syllabus of the service English courses in the university. Carrell (1988a:1) stresses that "without solid reading proficiency, second language readers cannot perform at levels they must in order to succeed" and she recommends that effective reading is essential for students in EFL contexts, those at advanced levels of proficiency, and those with a need for English for academic purposes. In other words, it is through reading that most students in EFL contexts, such as in Ethiopia, come in touch with the language, discover sources for their academic study and emancipate themselves from overdependence on lectures. They can verify what others propose; defend their view-points and develop the self-confidence in their methods of study and search for knowledge. All these learning activities depend on the ability to read in English; and the prerequisite for effective reading or successful interaction with a given text relies on the students' background knowledge of both English and their academic courses. The notion of reading in English for academic purposes embodies alternative theoretical assumptions informing both, to use Widdowson's terms (1983), the learning *purpose* and language *use*, to enable students to learn English to read their academic course books. On the surface, this task seems easy to pin down: the purpose is to read academic texts (in a very limited sense), and thus, identify the language needed for this purpose. Truly speaking, this is a gross oversimplification of the task, but the present service English courses seem to be way behind even in meeting the basics.

Reading in English for academic purposes, thus, embodies both the theoretical

assumptions underpinning the reading process and the reading strategies employed to cope with texts to be learned, and the various approaches for developing such a competence. Each of the three major models of reading discussed in this chapter - bottom-up data driven, top-down concept driven and interactive schema theoretic models - embodies a specific view of reading and the process of learning to develop background knowledge in order to effectively read. This chapter investigates briefly these major theories advanced to explain the reading process with reference to learning to develop background knowledge (schema) and explores the feasibility and accessibility of one possible approach, by relating it to an appropriate reading theory, to develop learners' reading ability. It underscores reading as an interactive process - involving various reader-text related factors - and focuses on the essential contribution of the learner-reader to the process of developing his/her background knowledge.

3.2 The reading process

It has been pointed out (section 2.3, Chapter 2) that traditionally reading was merely taken to facilitate the study of grammar in Ethiopia. In most instances, students were made to read aloud without having to make any efforts to understand what they were reading (Rogers 1967). They were made to memorize the meanings of words, usually given in glossaries, selected from the reading passages which were very long. This was usually the way the *Readers* (mentioned in section 2.3, Chapter 2) were handled in most Ethiopian schools.

Similarly, especially in the USA, before the 1970s reading was essentially taken as subsidiary to and reinforcement for oral language instruction. As indicated below, structuralist linguistics paid more attention to the study of phonology, and with the influence of behaviourism in psychology, students were made to focus on oral skills, particularly pronunciation. As Silberstein (cited in Grabe 1991) indicates, under the influence of audio-lingualism, reading was taught simply to aid in examining grammar and vocabulary or to practise pronunciation. It was this type of teaching approach that was recommended for Ethiopian schools by English language teaching experts (see section 2.3 and section 2.5, Chapter 2) during the same time to help students improve their English

(Tesfaye and Taylor 1976). It is to be noted that in the traditional Ethiopian Church education, reading was solely taken to be oral, tied to letter-to-letter and word to sentence pronunciation (section 2.3,Chapter 2; Haile Gabriel 1976).

The early works on ESL/EFL reading are dominated by the view of reading as a decoding activity, or what is popularly termed by researchers as the bottom up data driven approach to reading. That is, reading is considered mainly as a "decoding process of reconstructing the author's intended meaning via recognizing the printed letters and words, and building up a meaning for a text from the smallest textual units at the 'bottom' (letters and words) to larger and larger units at the 'top' (phrases, clauses, intersentential linkages)" (Carrell 1988a:1) - thus, the emphasis on phonology. Meaning is assumed to be in the text, contained in the form of these textual constraints that are hierarchically ordered, and the reader's task is to attend to these constraints to extract the writer's intended meaning. Because of its pattern of approach to information processing, this procedure is a bottom up data driven processing since the processor (the learner, reader, etc.) is assumed to attend to "perceptions, organize them, and then extract meaning from them" (Clark 1987:59).

The teacher of reading is then supposed to follow this theoretical outline to develop his/her students' reading ability. With the aid of a set of procedures based on audio-lingualism and behaviourism (as a basis for learning), the teacher is supposed to provide his/her students with drills on linguistic elements starting from the smallest textual item and building up to higher textual elements with emphasis given to the mastery of letter-sound relationship to develop pronunciation (see for instance, Lado 1945; Bloomfield 1942; Rivers 1968). The development of pronunciation and the mastery of these discrete textual elements is supposed to help develop linguistic ability. It is argued that, since meaning is assumed to be in the text (or too abstract to pin down, as Bloomfield 1942 contended), the vital element for language learning (or for developing background knowledge) is limited to proficiency in pronunciation.

However, it is interesting to note that the view that reading is parasitic on linguistic competence, at least on the lower skills, is still a topic of debate. Some researchers feel

that there might be a linguistic threshold for effective reading (Alderson 1984) and, thus suggest teaching students to develop this aspect of background knowledge before they can effectively read, while others argue that any deficiency in one aspect, say reading ability, is compensated for by the mastery of the other, the linguistic knowledge, and vice versa (Swaffar and others 1991). The inconclusiveness of available research evidence regarding this makes it difficult which one to give prominence to - the linguistic aspect or the reading skills - to help first year Addis Ababa University students (who generally seem deficient in both, anyway) to read their course books in English. Of course, both components will generate further questions such as whether or not they can be developed separately, what linguistic aspects to teach (aspects of *use* or *usage*, Widdowson 1983), what reading skills are (section 3.2222 below) and how to develop them.

The educational practice described above, especially regarding the approach to developing reading ability, was challenged by new developments related to emerging educational needs and the proposal of a different way of explaining the reading process. The former was related to the crucial need of non-English speaking students joining British and American universities to learn to read and follow their academic courses in English. The latter was related to a new approach to the reading process, based on cognitive psychology and psycholinguistics, expounded by Goodman.

In the 1970s American and British universities found that the contemporary audio-lingual method, with its emphasis on oral language skills assumed to enhance reading achievement, inappropriate to prepare a large number of ESL students with advanced academic skills required for the university (Carrell 1988a; Grabe 1991). They had to look for other ways of helping their students to cope with their academic reading in English. The universities started to design their own materials for teaching reading for academic purposes without any clear theoretical guidance on reading. In other words, in order to satisfy the felt need, that is, to enable non-English speaking students pursuing their studies in the British and American universities to effectively read and follow their academic courses, "ESL instruction changed in the early 1970s to emphasize advanced reading and writing instruction, albeit without a strong theoretical framework to guide practice" (Grabe 1991:376).

Similarly, many researchers and teachers appreciated the relevance of reading in language teaching and responded to the new way of explaining the reading process advanced by Goodman in their search for an effective approach to reading instruction, especially in ESL contexts. Goodman's proposal of a new theory of reading was not as such in response to ESL/EFL reading needs. His major preoccupation was mainly to prove the earlier stipulation about the reading process as wrong and to defend a new theory of reading based on the assumptions of cognitive psychology. He argued that reading was not primarily a decoding process - picking up information from the page in a letter-by-letter, word-by-word manner - it was rather a selective process, or a 'psycholinguistic guessing game' (Goodman 1976). Efficient readers utilize the knowledge they bring to the reading situation and then proceed by predicting information, sampling the text and confirming the prediction. Smith (1982) agreed with Goodman and added that sampling was effective because of the extensive redundancy built into natural language as well as the abilities of readers to make the necessary inferences from their background knowledge.

According to Grabe (1991:376*f*), the two significant attempts to translate the above approach, sometimes referred to as the psycholinguistic approach, to ESL reading instruction include that of Clarke and Silberstein (1977) and Coady (1979). Clarke and Silberstein, by deriving the implications of Goodman's psycholinguistic approach to reading, took reading as an active process of comprehending and emphasized that students needed to be taught effective strategies of reading such as guessing from context, defining expectations, making inferences about the text, and skimming ahead to fill in the context, because that was what fluent L1[1] readers, according to Goodman, were observed to be doing while reading. They suggested that teachers of reading should provide students with various effective approaches to texts such as helping them define goals and strategies for reading, use prereading activities to enhance conceptual readiness, and define strategies to deal with difficulties in syntax, vocabulary and organizational structure. In short, students were encouraged to make predictions by attending to limited textual samples to confirm their hypotheses.

[1]L1 stands for mother tongue or first language.

Likewise, Coady (1979) adapted Goodman's theory of L1 reading to suit second language learners. The overemphasis on reader contributions to reading without paying due attention to linguistic constraints, that were apparent in ESL[2] contexts anyway, led Coady to conceive L2[3] reading as consisting of process strategies, background knowledge and conceptual abilities. Process strategies, such as word identification, were employed by beginning readers while more abstract conceptual abilities and effective use of background knowledge characterized skilled readers. In other words, Coady proposed that the background knowledge of ESL readers interacts with their conceptual abilities and process strategies to enable them to comprehend a given text.

The various attempts made towards helping ESL/EFL[4] students studying in British and American universities, in particular, to read their academic course books in English effectively coupled with developments in fields such as linguistics, psychology and education gave rise to a proliferation of views and theories on ESL/EFL teaching methodology, syllabus and materials development. Jordan (1989:155) relates that "a large number of the investigations into aspects of reading in the 1970s, especially in the USA, concentrated upon EST[5]: they were largely concerned with an analysis of discourse, and, in particular, rhetorical functions. These studies were closely tied to specific subjects."

Moreover, Goodman's theoretical stipulation of the reading process triggered the flow of a mass of research on the process of reading, on the one hand, and the methods of applying reading research output to the teaching of reading in English as a second or foreign language for academic purposes. The explanation of the nature of the reading process and the role of background knowledge in reading is pursued by researchers in the broad domains of cognitive psychology and psycholinguistics (see section 3.221 below). Research in this area is concerned with the investigation of how a fluent reader reads.

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[2]ESL stands for English as a second language.

[3]L2 stands for a second language.

[4]EFL stands for English as a foreign language.

[5]EST stands for English for science and technology. EST is considered as a branch of ESP - English for specific purposes. EAP, English for academic purposes is also sometimes claimed to be a branch of ESP (Hutchinson and Waters 1987).

One of the dominant themes in this area is the definition of the nature, development and role of *schema* in reading - a theoretical metaphor for the reader's prior knowledge (Grabe 1991). Researchers in cognitive psychology and psycholinguistics question the explanatory usefulness of both the top-down inferential (Goodman's model) and schema-driven explanations of reading ability. As Grabe (1991:384) indicates,

> aside from the fact that we know we can call up prior knowledge from long-term memory, and that information seems to be integrated in efficient ways, it is difficult to know exactly how this prior knowledge is called up and used. The notion that our long-term memory is organized by *stable* schema structures does not appear to be strongly supported by current research.

Subsequently, interactive approaches to reading have taken a strong bottom-up approach, without denying the fact that prior knowledge is essential for reading. Current interactive approaches to reading, thus, assume that bottom-up processing contributes significantly to fluent reading. This argument is based on eye movement studies, research on word recognition and lexical access (see section 3.221 below). Studies on eye movements indicate that "some 80 per cent of content words and 40 per cent of function words are directly focused on in reading" (Grabe 1991:385). In fact the studies indicate that as readers

> we typically do not guess or sample texts, nor is reading an approximate skill. Rather, reading is a very precise and very rapid skill. ...The reason readers are so fast is not because they guess well but because they can identify the vast majority of the words automatically (Grabe 1991:385).

Research in second language reading, however, is concerned with those reading problems that are not usually considered in first language reading research. In general terms, according to Grabe (1991), these include second language acquisition and training background differences, language processing differences, and social context differences. The first category refers to the fact that second language readers begin reading in the target language with limited knowledge of the language. The second category refers to transfer effects from language processing differences that could cause reading problems, such as vocabulary cognates or orthography. The third category refers to the level of literacy skills second language readers have in their first language. Apparently, studies

in L1 reading cannot be directly applied to L2 reading because of these differences.

In an exploratory study for a possible approach to instruction in reading in English for academic purposes in Addis Ababa University, it is felt that it might be necessary to acknowledge the availability of some alternative explanations of the reading process while highlighting the preferred construct informing this research. Thus, a review of the major reading models and the current trends of reading research - the bottom-up data driven (the decoding model), the top-down concept driven (psycholinguistic model) and the interactive schema theoretic views of reading, with an emphasis on learning to read in a foreign language (in particular) or the role and development of background knowledge - is provided in an effort to indicate the connections between reader contributions, text nature and reader-text interaction in the process of reading. It is claimed that the first year social science students in Addis Ababa University have not had adequate English language learning experience in schools, and as a result, they have not been able to develop their background knowledge (section 2.6 Chapter 2). This could be the reason why most students are poor readers in English.

It is also noted that effective reader-text interaction entails the active participation of the reader to develop both his/her schematic and systemic knowledge or background knowledge. Thus, in order to realize this, a possible approach to develop the learner's abilities to read his/her academic course books in English - the individualised approach to learning to read in a foreign language - is qualified in the second half of this chapter.

3.21 Models of the reading process

3.211 Bottom-up models

It has been pointed out above that bottom-up data driven models of reading are based on the assumption that the learner attends to perceptions, organizes them and then summarises meaning from them (Clark 1987:59; Carrell 1988a). Samuels and Kamil (1988:31) state that "bottom-up models start with the printed stimuli and work their way up to the higher level stages." However, it has been argued that these serialist models

"fail to account for a variety of context effects (Rumelhart 1977) and could not explain the situation "whereby higher level processes can affect lower levels" (Stanovich 1980:34) and they were found to be inadequate, according to Eskey (1973), as reading theories since they disregarded readers' contributions and failed to see that readers utilize their expectations about the text based on their knowledge of the language and how it operates. Smith (1982:233-4) contends that "the spelling-to-sound correspondences cannot possibly be the basis of reading or learning to read because they do not transplant print into comprehensible speech." On the contrary, he argues, "it is the predictions of readers, the intentions of writers and the conventions of texts ... (that) make communication through written language and the experience of reading possible" (180).

It has been pointed out above that the structuralist-behaviourist school stressed oral language skills and these were assumed to be developed through intensive drilling (Fries 1945; Lado 1964; Rivers 1968) and the decoding of sound-symbol relationship was taken as pivotal to improve pronunciation and reading proficiency. In Ethiopia, in the 1970s, this approach was recommended not only as a solution for reading problems in English in schools, but also for all linguistic problems (Madsen 1976). In such a system, aspects of meaning and readers' contributions to the reading process were not considered as important.

3.212 Top-down models

Antithetically, as it has been pointed out above, Goodman (1976:498) contends that reading is an active process whereby the reader makes guesses using his/her background knowledge and confirms these by employing as few clues as possible from the print. Goodman states that reading is simply a psycholinguistic game which entails the

> partial use of available minimal language cues selected from perceptual input on the basis of the reader's expectation. As this partial information is processed, tentative decisions are made to be confirmed, rejected, or refined as reading progresses. ...It involves an interaction between thought and language. Efficient reading does not result from precise perception and identification of all elements, but from skill in selecting the fewest, most productive cues necessary to produce guesses which are right the first time. The ability to anticipate that which has not

been seen, of course, is vital in reading.

The above exposition about the reading process in which the text is sampled and predictions are made on the basis of the reader's prior syntactic and semantic knowledge has been styled as a top down concept driven model (Anderson 1978; Rumelhart 1977; Samuels and Kamil 1988). By emphasizing the role of background knowledge in the process of reading, Goodman (1976) argues that automatic processing ability in reading is the result of the sum total of the reader's experience and his/her language and thought development. In other words, "what appears to be intuitive in any guessing is actually the result of knowledge so well learned that the process of its application requires little conscious effort. Most language use has reached this automatic intuitive level" (501).

It is argued that the reader reconstructs meaning from the text by employing the different systems of the language (graphophonic, syntactic and semantic), "but he or she merely uses cues from these three levels of language to predict meaning, and, most important, confirms those predictions by relating them" (Carrell 1988a:3) to background knowledge that consists of past experiences and linguistic knowledge. Background knowledge embodies "knowledge of the world, of the content being read, of the context involved, of semantics, syntax, morphology, or even of phonetics or orthography" (Brown 1986:1).

Smith (1982:166) asserts that "the twin foundations of reading are to be able to ask specific questions (make predictions)...and to know how and where to look at print so that there is at least a chance of getting these predictions answered." He expounds the concept of prediction as "the elimination of unlikely alternatives on the basis of prior knowledge" (1977:388). van Dijk and Kintsch (1983:25), however, feel that such pure top-down processing is "psychologically absurd" and argue that this activity can only be labelled as "thinking" and not "reading". However, Samuels and Kamil (1988:24) claim that Smith's greatest contribution is his explanation of how redundancy inherent in all the systems of a language (letter features, within letters, within words, within sentences, within discourses) can aid the reader "with enormous flexibility in marshalling resources to create a meaning for the text at hand." Some researchers argue that the automaticity observed in good readers is not because they make accurate guesses but because they have the

ability to exploit the redundancy in language (van Dijk and Kintsch 1983).

In a nut-shell, "top-down conceptually driven processing (or reading) enables us to obtain a rapid expectation of what is likely to occur on the basis of previous experience, and to match this against the incoming sensory data (or text)" (Clark 1987:59). For Smith (1982:8), learning to read and reading to learn are the same. He says that "there are no special kinds of skills that beginners must learn and exercise that are not involved in fluent reading, nor is there any part of fluent reading that is not a part of learning to read. ... Everyone must read in order to learn to read, and every time we read we learn more about reading." However, as indicated above, top-down models have been criticised on some grounds based on empirical findings (Garner 1987). It is argued that they do not describe skilled reading behaviour accurately (Samuels and Kamil 1988:32) and the idea of generating an infinite set of predictions, without any purpose and context constraints, does not seem plausible and does not characterize effective reading (Mitchell 1982). Weber (1984), Rumelhart (1977), Stanovich (1980), Ulijin (1980), Perfetti (1985), and Waltz and Pollack (1985) contend these models do not accommodate important empirical evidence. Garner (1987) argues that these models are not supported by empirical data. For instance, it is argued that the speed for making hypothesis and generating a series of predictions should be greater than the speed for bottom up word identification in order for these models to be accepted as empirically convincing. However, it has been found that this is not the case in fluent reading. The models are also criticised for vagueness of conceptualisation (Garner 1987; Mitchell 1982). Their concept of prediction does not seem to explain the automaticity in recognizing lower textual constraints which is a characteristic of fluent readers (van Dijk and Kintsch 1983; Mitchell 1982; section 3.221 below).

3.213 Interactive schema-theoretic models

It has been pointed out that "bottom-up models start with the printed stimuli and work their way up to the higher-level stages, whereas the top-down models start with hypotheses and predictions and attempt to verify them by working down to printed stimuli" (Samuels and Kamil 1988:31; Carrell and Eisterhold 1988). It is argued that

while the former assume reading as a passive activity, in the sense that reader contributions are disregarded and the ability to read would somehow develop when one masters the hierarchically-ordered textual constraints, the latter emphasise that reading is an active process whereby the reader is engaged in making predictions and confirming these by employing as little visual input as possible from the text. However, the emphasis in both models has fundamentally remained linguistic knowledge of the reader (Williams and Moran 1989). The former disregards readers' contributions and the significance of background knowledge in processing a given text (presumably meaning is assumed to be in the text and the reader's role is to extract this), and the latter overemphasizes readers' contributions - equating reading with learning and hypothesis testing or confirming predictions - and pays little attention to textual constraints which seem to be the problems of ESL/EFL readers. It might be stated that top-down models are about fluent L1 reading. If so, researchers in favour of these models do not provide an explanation of L2 reading. As Allen (1986:15-16) observes, in most ESL/EFL classes "all too often reading becomes a mechanical, word-by-word translation exercise rather than a dynamic information sorting and synthesizing."

The relevance of prior knowledge or background knowledge to reading as information processing activity has led to research on how this prior knowledge is developed, stored and retrieved during reading (Rumelhart and Ortony 1977; Rumelhart 1980; Anderson and Pearson 1988). The various investigations on background knowledge or 'schema' indicate that the greater the background knowledge a reader has of a text's content area, the better he/she will understand that text (Carrell 1988b). Bransford and Johnson (1973:434) have confirmed that "the relevance of an utterance, or any visual message, is determined by our discovery of a relevant context in our conceptual knowledge about the world." This may imply that the reading problems of some students in the Addis Ababa University may be attributed to the lack of or the inability to invoke appropriate background knowledge or 'schema'. Rumelhart (1980:34) states that all knowledge, according to schema theories, "is packaged into units. These units are the schemata. Embedded in these packets of knowledge is, in addition to the knowledge itself, information about how this knowledge is to be used". In the process of learning, it is these packets of knowledge that are modified, changed or extended to accommodate for the new acquired knowledge.

Williams and Moran (1989:218) state that early studies on schema theory related to L1 reading confirmed that background knowledge and reader experience were essential for interpreting ambiguous passages (see also Anderson, Reynolds, Schallert and Goetz 1977). Freebody and Anderson (1983) found that background knowledge was more important than vocabulary difficulty in comprehending texts. Moreover, activating schemata before reading enhanced students' comprehension and recall (Wilson and Anderson 1986). However, Steffenson and Joag-Dev (1984) point out that although culture related schema is essential in reading, an inappropriate schema could be invoked (due to cultural differences) to cause some errors.

It has been pointed out that the psycholinguistic approach to reading assumes that "learning is the modification or elaboration of what is already known of cognitive structure, the theory of the world in the head" (Smith 1982:98). Learning is said to occur "when any of the three components of this theory - the category system, the rules for relating objects or events to categories (sets of distinctive features), or the complex network of interrelations among categories" is modified. It has also been pointed out that there is no difference between the processes of learning and reading (Smith 1982). On the other hand, learning or the modification of background knowledge, according to schema theorists, is assumed to involve both the formation of a new schema, and the modification of an already existing one (Rumelhart 1980).

Background knowledge is stored in memory in some form of abstract structure. This abstract structure is the schema. A schema abstracts or summarizes all various experiences and awareness of a variety of things and arranges or structures them in ways they are related to each other (Anderson and Pearson 1988:42). Similarly, Widdowson (1983:34-35) states that schemata can be taken as "cognitive constructs which allow for the organization of information in long-term memory and which provide a basis for prediction. They are kinds of stereotypic images which we map on to actuality in order to make sense of it, and to provide it with a coherent pattern." They are tools for the interpretation of reality.

Despite the fact that the schema theory is criticised as inadequate framework for the

mental representation of prior knowledge, its implications have been found useful for improving reading instruction in ESL contexts. Carrell (1988b) states that background knowledge in reading consists of formal and content schemata. Formal schemata (or systemic knowledge) are considered to include background knowledge of the formal, rhetorical organizational structures of different texts. In other words, they represent all abstract knowledge structure of the differences among rhetorical organizations such as differences in genre, in the structure of fables, simple stories, scientific texts, newspaper articles and the like. Content schemata (or schematic knowledge) represent all the background knowledge of the content of a given text. While the former focus on the background knowledge of textual constraints, the latter stress the background knowledge of the content of the text. This definition is from the reader's perspective, that is, a reader's schemata embody all the background knowledge of textual factors (or mainly linguistic constraints and their inter-relationships) and content factors (related to the text - socio-cultural, or academic disciplines, and the like and their connections) and their relationships (Carrell and Eisterhold 1988). The emphasis on ESL reading schema research, however, has been dominated by the separate study of the above factors as independent elements.

According to schema theorists, the comprehension or learning of a text is related to one's ability to "find a mental home for the information in the text" or to be able to "modify an existing mental home in order to accommodate that new information" (Anderson and Pearson 1988:37). Similarly, Widdowson (1983:37) qualifies "a mental home" or schema as a "stereotypic pattern derived from instances of past experience which organizes language in preparation for use." It is a *frame of reference* (in relation to the propositional content of discourse or to what is being said), and a *rhetorical routine* (in relation to the illocutionary activity of discourse or to what is being done). He states that in most cases the "collocation of particular lexical items" will be associated with the "frame of reference" and if this is invoked, it will "generate expectations about what is to come". This expectation, thus, is tied to the expectation that arises from the identification of a particular rhetorical routine manifest in texts.

It is argued that the reading process, according to the interactive schema theoretic view,

is the interaction of schematic and systemic knowledge of the reader. The former is what has already been referred to as content schemata and the latter as formal schemata or linguistic schemata in a broad sense. It is hypothesized that

> the act of reading does not involve so much the accumulation of new knowledge as the *confirmation* of predictions based on what is already known. We bring to reading, as we do to all experience of language use, what Frank Smith calls 'the theory of the world in the head' ... and this theory leads us to set up hypotheses, or in my terms schematic projections, to be tested as further information comes in from the discourse process (Widdowson 1983:61).

Thus, it is this 'theory of the world in the head', or schema (or the abstract structure), when appropriately invoked by incoming stimuli from print - a word, a phrase or a sentence, for example - that helps the reader to comprehend the intent or message of the writer, as stipulated above. In other words, as Widdowson (1979, 1990) argues, the writer is engaged in some kind of vicarious interaction with an imagined reader. He/she takes certain assumptions as known by the imagined reader and bases his/her points on these assumptions. These assumptions are related to textual and content constraints. The reader, on the other hand, is supposed to play his/her part in the negotiative act, which is sometimes referred to as the process of the negotiation of meaning, initiated by the writer. "If the reader has more knowledge than the writer has supposed, then he will tend to disregard the discourse that has been plotted in the act of writing and simply takes from the text whatever best suits his purpose. If the reader knows less ... than supposed, he will have to draw on systemic knowledge. ... If this strategy fails, then the meanings remain inaccessible, the text non-negotiable" (1990:108), and it can be assumed that there is a failure in communication. This may be given as a possible explanation for the inability of students considered in the baseline study to process the given reading texts (section 2.6 Chapter 2; ***Appendix 1.2***). It has been pointed out (section 2.6 Chapter 2 above) that some of the students considered for the baseline study seem not to be able to process the texts given to them probably because they know less than supposed by the writers of the respective texts. It might be doubtful to assert that their deficiency can only be attributed to linguistic problems.

Admittedly, this exploratory exposition is a simplified (when one realizes how complex

the reading process is) and an exclusive (since it does not include the host of variables simultaneously operating in the act of reading) representation of the reading process. However, it highlights two fundamental points: the relevance of background knowledge (both linguistic and content knowledge) for processing information in the medium of writing, and the interaction between the elements of this background knowledge. Current research has indicated that inability to activate appropriate schemata is a major source of difficulty in second language reading (Carrell 1988b).

The interactive approaches to reading - accommodating both bottom-up and top-down assumptions of the reading process, but not with equal emphasis to each approach (see for example, Perfetti 1985, 1990; Rayner and Pollatsek 1989, and Stanovich 1990, for strong bottom-up views but still accepting that reading is an interactive process) - centre on the interaction between the reader and the text, as indicated above (Barnett 1989; Carrell and Eisterhold 1988) on the one hand, and the interaction of various component cognitive skills to effect fluent reading comprehension, on the other. Most researchers now claim that the interactive approach takes reading as an interactive process involving both an array of lower-level rapid, automatic identification skills and a higher-level comprehension or interpretation skills (Eskey 1986; Eskey and Grabe 1988; Samuels and Kamil 1988).

The notion "interaction" (a term easy to use but difficult to pin down to empirical investigation) has become a buzz word in the two major trends in current reading research. Most cognitive psychologists and psycholinguists are interested in the area of defining the relationship and interaction between the various cognitive skills, such as automaticity in recognition of textual features, of L1 fluent readers. Some hold the stipulations of the schema models of reading with scepticism and the trend in this area has been to encourage research output which is explicit and testable (section 3.2 above). On the other hand, most second language researchers have emphasized the study of the process of interaction between the reader and the text by investigating both reader-textual factors, as indicated below (Grabe 1991).

3.22 Approaches to the study of the reading process

3.221 The component skills of reading

It has been pointed out above that cognitive psychologists and educational psychologists prefer to investigate the reading process - incidentally, the learning process - by exploring its component skills. Grabe (1991) summarizes these skills into six component parts that have more or less determined the paths of inquiry into the reading process in this area: automatic recognition and identification skills, vocabulary and structural knowledge, formal discourse structure, content or world background knowledge, synthesis and evaluation skills or strategies, and metacognitive knowledge and skills monitoring.

A major preoccupation of reading theorists is the exploration of automaticity in fluent reading. The automatic perceptual or identification skills refer to those that a fluent reader employs unaware of the process, not consciously controlling the process, and using little processing capacity (Adams 1990; Just and Carpenter 1987; Stanovich 1990), especially to identify features, letters or words. The major area of concern in studies in automaticity is at the feature, letter or word levels which demonstrate a fluent L1 reader's lexical access skills. Grabe (1991:380) relates that many researchers in the area are now convinced that "automatic lexical access is a necessary skill for fluent readers, and many less-skilled readers lack automaticity in lower level processing." It is believed that the lexical element of fluent readers becomes "encapsulated, that is, the process of lexical access during reading does not make use of contextual resources."(1991:380; also Stanovich 1990). By comparing the reading styles of poor and good readers, van Dijk and Kintsch (1983:23-24) argue that

> the greatest facilitation of word recognition by meaningful context is observed with poor readers, not with good readers. Furthermore, it is simply not true that good readers take decoding lightly; they fixate almost every content word. ...It has been found ... that the best discriminator between good and poor readers is performance on simple letter and word identification tasks. What is really wrong with poor readers is that they recognize isolated words inaccurately and too slowly, and compensate for their lack in decoding skills with context-dependent guessing or hypothesis testing. ...Good readers with their superior decoding skills can decode letters and words rapidly in a bottom-up fashion, and therefore do not

> normally need to resort to guessing strategies. ...What is really at issue are the speed and accuracy of context-free word recognition operations.

These findings and their implications may force one to question the basic assumptions of both the top-down concept driven models and the schema theories. It seems that fluency in reading is not necessarily the outcome of the reader's adeptness in generating hypotheses and confirming them. van Dijk and Kintsch argue that automaticity in word recognition plays a significant role in fluent reading.

The second area of exploration is the role of vocabulary and syntactic knowledge in fluent reading. Berman (1984), Devine (1988), Eskey (1988), Swaffar, and others (1991) assert the importance of structural knowledge in second language reading comprehension. Moreover, Anderson and Freebody (1981), Chall (1987), Nation (1990) and Swaffar (1988) stress vocabulary knowledge as important in second language reading.

The third field of inquiry is the role of the knowledge of formal discourse structure (formal schemata) in fluent reading. It has been established by various researchers that knowledge of the organization of a given text aids reading comprehension. Good readers exploit a given text organization and tend to employ this better than poor readers to write recalls, and they can do this only from certain types of text organization. Carrell (1984) has noted that specific logical patterns of text organization (such as cause-effect, compare-contrast, and problem-solution) help readers to recall better than texts which are loosely organized around a collection of facts.

The fourth area of study is concerned with the role of content and background knowledge (content schemata). The research supporting the fact that prior knowledge of text-related information as affecting reading comprehension is quite extensive (Anderson and Pearson 1984; Kintsch and van Dijk 1978; Wilson and Anderson 1986; Alderson and Urquhart 1988, to mention a few). Similarly, Carrell (1984b), Pritchard (1990), Steffensen and Joag-Dev (1984) studied the influence of cultural knowledge on reading. Carrell (1987) has also studied the influence of formal and content knowledge on reading comprehension.

The fifth area of concern mentioned by Grabe is the readers' ability to employ synthesis and evaluation skills and strategies to evaluate text information and compare or synthesize it with other sources of information or knowledge. It has been pointed out above that this skill of reading does not seem to be dependent on one's ability to predict. "Given the real time constraints of the reading process, fluent readers typically do not use prediction to decide upcoming words in texts or to access words; rather prediction helps readers anticipate later text information presented" (Grabe 1991:381). Thus, this will allow readers to decide whether the information contained in the text is relevant and to agree or disagree with the writer's point of view.

The last area of study in the component skills of reading is what is popularly termed as the metacognitive knowledge of reading. This refers to the knowledge about cognition and the self-regulation of cognition (Flavell 1979; Baker and Brown 1984; Brown, Armbruster and Baker 1986; Garner 1987). Knowledge about cognition involves recognizing patterns of structure and organization and using appropriate strategies to achieve specific goals, such as comprehending texts or remembering information.

Metacognitive knowledge of reading would involve, among other things, recognizing the more important information in the text; adjusting reading rate; using context to sort out a misunderstood segment; skimming portions of the text; previewing headings, pictures, and summaries; using search strategies for finding specific information; formulating questions about the information; using a dictionary; using word formation and affix information to guess word meanings; taking notes; underlining; summarizing information; and so on. Monitoring or employing of cognition includes recognizing problems with information presented in texts or an inability to achieve expected goals (for example, recognizing an illogical summary or awareness of non-comprehension). Self regulation strategies would include planning ahead, testing self-comprehension, checking effectiveness of strategies being used, revising strategies being used, and so on (see Table 4.3, Chapter 4, for the metacognitive questionnaire, or the set of reading strategies, employed in the current study; Hosenfeld 1977; Rubin 1987; Chamot 1987; O'Malley 1987). Barnett (1989), and Cohen (1990) have set lists of reading strategies which combine cognitive strategy use and monitoring.

Research on this area confirms that good readers employ metacognitive skills more effectively than poor readers. Hosenfeld (1984) has found out that successful readers seem to keep the meaning of the passage in mind, read in broad phrases, skip unessential words, guess from context the meaning of words; on the other hand, unsuccessful readers tend to lose the meaning of sentences as soon as they decode them, read word-by-word or in short phrases, rarely skip words, turn to the glossary for the meaning of new words. Similarly, successful readers seem to choose a reading approach appropriate to a given text and their purpose in reading it; they summarize as they go along; they read for general meaning , and they tolerate ambiguity in their reading until they can clarify the meaning (Rubin 1981). Recent research on second language reading instruction has focused on the effectiveness of strategy training for improved reading comprehension (see for instance, Wenden and Rubin 1987; Barnett 1989; Cohen 1990; Carrell, Pharis and Liberto 1989; Swaffar and others 1991).

3.222 Studies on reader-text interaction

Second language researchers have studied the reading process by probing into what they consider as the decisive element in the process of reading, the reader-text interaction. It is admitted that the emphasis of one component of the reading process at the expense of another may not accurately illuminate what is going on in the process, however, for the sake of analysis, the process has been "frozen", such as in forms of models or constructs, to allow investigation. Alderson and Urquhart (1984), and Williams and Moran (1989) take the following arbitrary categories of the process to help them discuss the pertinent research questions and findings: the text, the reader and the interaction between the reader and the text. It is to be noted that these aspects of the reading process have been discussed above in relation to the relevance of the reader's background knowledge to effective reading. Each model of reading ascribes particular attributes to each aspect. For instance, the decoding model takes the text as containing the writer's entire meaning and the task of the reader is to extract this. According to the psycholinguistic model it is the reader's background knowledge or 'the theory of the world in the head' that is the most important and the text facilitates the ability to confirm predictions and make further hypotheses.

3.2221 The text

Candlin (1984) and Widdowson (1983, 1984) argue that the text (as a collection of features, letters or words) does not contain meaning. Meaning is not in the text. Although text embodies a "residual quantum of meaning," it is the readers, with their meaning-generating capacities and helped by the clues in the text that invoke their schemata, who expand and develop this potential (Widdowson 1990). However, these readers' capacities, depending on both linguistic and extra-linguistic experience (or background knowledge), reading purposes and the affective involvement of the readers, make the reading process more complex and render textual descriptions, however elaborate, inadequate to explain readers' comprehension difficulties. Moreover, the meanings generated from texts may vary from reader to reader. As Candlin (1984:x) states, "texts do not have unitary meanings potentially accessible to all; they rather allow for variety in interpretation by different readers, governed by factors such as purpose, background knowledge, and the relationship established between the reader and the writer."

It is also contended that text accessibility and reading comprehension are related to each other. Anderson (1971:180) confirms this assumption by stating that "the readability or reading difficulty of a passage and a reader's comprehension of a passage ... are two ways of looking at the same event. If there is close correspondence between the decoder's and the encoder's system of 'language habits', then the passage or message is easy to comprehend. If there is not, comprehension is difficult." Widdowson (1990) on the other hand, emphasizes that encoder-decoder correspondence should be envisaged not only on systemic constraints (if that is what Anderson wants to imply when he mentions 'language habits') but also on schematic (all the various assumptions embedded in a text) aspects as well.

The above views about text-reader relationships have superseded those held in the 1950s and the 1960s. Behaviouristic views took reading as a means of facilitating language practice through the use of simplified texts and graded readers, as mentioned above (Williams and Moran 1989; section 2.3, Chapter 2 above, for a list of such readers used

in Ethiopian schools in the 1950s and 1960s, graded on lexical and syntactic aspects). Apparently, the major concern was on the linguistic accessibility of texts to imagined readers, mostly school children, and various types of readability formulae were developed to tap this difficulty considered to be mainly caused by word length and frequency, and sentence length and complexity. These readability formulae were used extensively in all areas, especially, in schools, courts, hospitals and the like in the United States of America (Klare 1969).

To relate this to the current concern, research studies (see section 2.6, Chapter 2 above) have indicated that social science first year students find their academic course books too difficult to read. Some researchers have used readability formulae, including the cloze procedure, to determine the level of difficulty of the course books and claim to have identified the gap between the readability of the course books and the reading ability of the students. It might not be wrong to assume that students find their course books difficult to read with a reasonably high degree of comprehension and involvement. What may be a bit hard to accept would be first, whether or not the tools they employed can be justified to indicate what they claim, or if not, what they actually measure.

The readability index of a text is established by taking word and sentence constraints into consideration. In other words,

> word difficulty may relate to infrequency of occurrence, and has been indexed either by reference to frequency lists, or by reference to word length, usually measured in number of syllables, since, on the whole, longer words tend to be less frequent and therefore might be expected to cause processing problems. Sentence complexity can be measured by a variety of devices, ranging from the number of transformations required to produce the surface string from a posited deep structure ... to a simple count of the number of words in a sentence, since, again on the whole, the longer the sentence, the more complex it is likely to be, with embedded and subordinate clauses and the like...(Alderson and Urquhart 1984:xxii).

By stating the practical definition of readability as "elements of writing (text) that are related to readers' success: content, style, format and organization" (1969:6-7), Klare argues that though readability has come to be used to indicate the *legibility* of either

handwriting or typography, *ease of reading* due to either the interest-value or the pleasantness of writing, and *ease of understanding* or comprehension due to the style of writing, it has mainly emphasized the last one which is usually assessed by subjective measures (such as asking readers their opinions about the level of difficulty of a text they have been given to read, taking teachers' and experts' opinion regarding the difficulty level of a given text, or even administering multiple choice questions to establish level of comprehension to aid in the decision for readability) and a set of readability formulae. But, Klare contends that skill factors, set to learn and the principle of least effort (as indicated in Figure 3.1, below) are not a direct function of textual factors, and thus they cannot be included in a readability formula - this being as the basic discrepancy of readability formulae.

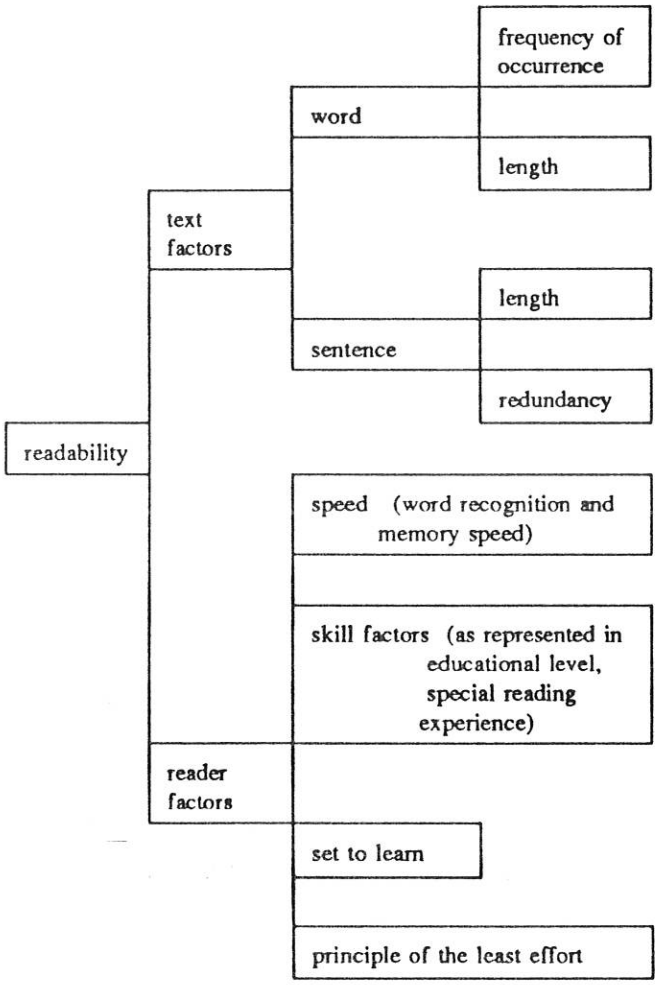

Figure 3.1 Summary of readability constraints (adapted from Klare 1969:6-7)

Dale and Chall (cited in Gilliland 1972) stipulate that "readability is the sum total (including interactions) of all those elements within a given piece of printed material that affects the success which a group of readers have with it." They state that success is to be seen in terms of comprehension, speed and level of interest. Of course, it is highly debatable whether or not one could come up with a formula that measures all these factors. Another aspect of a readability formula is its reliability and validity. Harrison (1980) takes some factors to investigate the reliability of any given readability formula. These include *sampling* (that is, how consistently the formula does its job of predicting the difficulty level of a whole passage or book on the basis of a number of samples), *age level accuracy* (that is, how accurately it predicts the age level of the passage) and *analyst reliability* (that is, how accurately the teacher or researcher does the calculations). These traditional criteria could be taken as rough guidelines and not as scientifically proven parameters of validating a given readability formula.

However, the claims of most readability formulae could not be substantiated and it is found out that no formula consistently predicts a similar grade level to any other formula (Stokes 1978:21). Harrison 1980 has also indicated the limitations of the readability formulae he selected for study, and he recommends the use of appropriate formulae for various purposes and concludes that there is no single formula that can be used for all levels; he advises the user to be selective and provides the preferred list of formulae for selected levels. On a practical level, most of the readability formulae are easy to handle, but it is not clear what they really measure. If it is argued that meaning does not reside in the text but is the result of the reader's interaction with the given text (Widdowson 1984), it is unclear what these readability formulae (with their emphasis on textual factors, even that limited to few aspects of the text) measure.

Another point of contention is what these readability indices indicate or what could be done if a text was found to be difficult according to the prediction of the selected readability formula. It is argued that these indices cannot indicate causes of reading difficulty. In other words, if one applies a readability formula to a text, finds it difficult for a given group of readers, and then manipulates the text to shorten sentence length and remove or replace any long words, it may not necessarily follow that the cause of

difficulty has been removed: the text might actually have been made more difficult, although the readability index would indicate that it is an easy text (Alderson and Urquhart 1984: xxii; Grellet 1981; Davies 1984). By selecting short sentences with one or two-syllable common words, according to the indications of the readability formula employed, one might get a low readability index. However, the new text, thus created, may have lost its redundant elements, essential rhetorical devices, and some of the words may have become more difficult than the original ones. The task of simplifying a text in this manner is aimed at the simplification of usage and not use (Widdowson 1979; Davies 1984); the attempts to make the text syntactically less complex may distort the original meaning.

In conclusion, it might be remarked that readability formulae mostly detach a text from its readership and its context - thus denying it its potential for meaning. In other words, these formulae disregard reader variables - background knowledge and the heterogeneity of readers - in order to establish readability indices of texts. Thus, it might be very difficult to come up with conclusive results regarding the qualification of the gap between the social science first year students' reading ability and the readability levels of their course books (which may not be easy to specify which course books are used by university students since they are expected to refer to various sources indicated in most course reading lists supplied by respective instructors using the readability formulae; and the readability formulae are based on L1 readers' performance.

The other method employed to determine text difficulty is what is commonly called the cloze procedure. The cloze procedure (not a readability formula) is claimed to tap both reader and text constraints, or more explicitly, the correspondence between the grammatical and semantic 'habit systems' of encoders and decoders (Anderson 1971). First employed by Taylor to test reading comprehension, it was assumed that it was based on the concept of closure in gestalt psychology. However, since the gestalt explanations of closure are related to merely perceptual stimuli rather than to cognitive thought processes, many researchers associated the functioning mechanisms of the cloze with the concept of 'noise' in Weaver's model of communication theory. By way of justifying the cloze procedure, Anderson indicates the assumed theoretical roots by stating that

> according to the language communication model ... the transmission and receiving of a message are seen essentially as coding operations. The source or encoder, the writer or author, produces a message, a passage of printed English. Noise, which in the present context consists of mutilation of the language patterns of the message, interrupts the coded message before it is received, by the decoder or reader. To decode the message, cloze procedure requires the reader to construct the mutilated language patterns by making the most likely replacement in the light of his language system and the grammatical and semantic cues that are available (1971:179-180).

Moreover, it is claimed that the crucial aptitude in answering cloze tests is the ability to exploit linguistic redundancy (Anderson 1971; Harrison 1980; Smith 1982). In line with the psycholinguistic view of the reading process, Smith (1982:229) expounds the concept of redundancy as a major factor in cloze.

> One way of interpreting a high score for a particular space would be that there are very few alternative words that could be put in that position - the uncertainty is low. And the only reason that uncertainty is low in that position is that most of the alternative words have been eliminated by information acquired from other parts of the passage, from the words that have not been removed. Passages that get a relatively large number of missing words correctly replaced may therefore be regarded as more easily comprehensible than those whose spaces are more dubious; thus this type of score is sometimes interpreted as a measure of the "intelligibility" or "readability" of a passage.

Harrison (1980:102) claims that the cloze test is both reliable and valid and recommends a seventh-word deletion rather than a fifth-word deletion if the students are weak. He also prefers verbatim scoring and states that the cloze test indicates information gain in general knowledge, linguistic competence and general intelligence. On a fifth-word deletion, he suggests that the scores can be interpreted as 35 per cent to 40 per cent as *frustrational* (material too difficult for the learner), 40 per cent to 55 per cent as *instructional* (the learner can manage the reading with some teacher's help), and 55 per cent to 60 per cent as *independent* (the learner can handle the material on his/her own). These recommendations are made based on earlier research findings by Bormuth (1968). The cut-off points are corroborated by further research conducted in Fijian schools (Elley 1984). An alternative cut-off points based on the seventh-word deletion is 37 per cent and below as *frustrational*, 38 per cent to 50 per cent as *instructional* and 51 per cent and

above as *independent* (Cripwell 1976). The current study selected this for the analysis of the cloze test results (section 5.222 and section 5.322 Chapter 5) but it should be noted that these cut-off points are guidelines for assessing text accessibility.

Despite the strong claims made, cloze tests do not seem to answer the question what causes a text to be difficult. It has also been argued that the cloze procedure is limited as a tool for identifying text difficulty. It is claimed to be insensitive to aspects that range beyond the context immediately surrounding a deletion (Alderson 1979, 1980; Porter 1978, 1983; Shanahan and Kamil 1982, 1983, to mention a few). Alderson (1979, 1980) and Davies (1984) contend that the cloze procedure is variable and may be limited to assessing lower order linguistic ability.

On the other hand, some researchers feel that the cloze procedure is sensitive to inter-sentential constraints and can be effectively employed to test higher-order skills (Bachman 1982). Bachman (1982, 1985), Brown (1983), Chavez-Oller, and others (1985), Gamara and Jonz(1987), Jonz (1987, 1990), among others, argue that cloze is stable, reliable and sensitive to comprehension processes at various levels; some (Bachman 1985) recommend a rational deletion and not the conventional every n^{th} word deletion.

The argument whether or not to use readability formulae and/or the cloze procedure to establish text difficulty has not yet been settled as evidenced by the recent article by Jonz (1990) on the merits of the cloze procedure. However, other researchers have pursued other routes to define text difficulty without venturing to provide their readers with a formula or a tool for identifying text difficulty (section 3.221 above). Cooper (1984), Williams and Dallas (1984), and Wodinsky and Nation (1988) have studied vocabulary as an index of text difficulty, while Berman (1984) mentions structure, Urquhart (1984) examines text organisation as an aspect of text difficulty.

Despite the heated debate about the limitations of the readability formulae and the cloze procedure - that is, whether or not they precisely measure text difficulty and, even if they do, they do not indicate the cause of the difficulty - they are still used by some reading course writers to select and grade texts. For instance, the ***SRA*** reading packages and the

ELSIP seem to be produced by the use of a variety of readability formulae and the cloze procedure. The two types of reading sets will be discussed in some detail below, but it seems apt to include here briefly an investigation of the general assumptions used by some current course designers for reading in English for academic purposes.

After having undertaken a series of investigations on the reading abilities of their students, mostly based on discourse analysis, Selinker, Todd-Trimble and Trimble (cited in Jordan 1989:155-156; section 3.2 above) concluded that their students "often seem unable to comprehend the total meaning of the EST discourse even when they understand all of the words in each sentence and all of the sentences that make up the discourse." They suggest that students should be taught to see the rhetorical organizations in their reading texts, and teaching materials for reading in EST should provide ample exercises on rhetorical devices. Thus they felt that the rhetorical organizations of scientific texts in English contributed to their inaccessibility and recommended the teaching of these to students.

Text difficulty is presumably an area of interest for reading materials writers. Some may employ, such as the graded readers producers, indices of text difficulty to select and grade texts. Usually, lexical and syntactic factors are considered in the graded readers (Bamford 1984). Bloor (1985) surveys the design and the theoretical justifications for the design of some contemporary reading courses claiming to help EFL students improve their reading ability for academic purposes. Her analysis does not include the assumptions from the selection and grading of the reading texts. Fundamentally, all reading courses claim to help students develop the ability to read a variety of non-fiction texts for the purpose of gaining information (this *per se* is controversial; we may read not necessarily for gaining information, and there may not be a difference in developing the ability to read texts that are dense with information and those with less information; purpose and background knowledge of the reader, among other things, seem to override the whole process).

Bloor (1985:342) admits that in light of the speculations, opinions and claims made by reading materials writers, "it is often difficult to sort out the reasons for particular

activities let alone establish their validity." She identifies four categories based on the approaches these course books seemed to reflect. The first is what she types as the psychological approach. This includes all those courses that "claim to provide exercises or activities which train natural reading processes; they focus on what takes place in the mind of the individual reader" (page 342). The courses focus on two distinct levels - word recognition (the graphic-phonic relationship) and interpretation (the syntactic-semantic-pragmatic relationship in the text). Examples are provided from *Skills for Reading* (Morrow 1980), and *Reading and Thinking in English* (Moore and others 1979/80).

The second category includes those materials that implicitly or explicitly employ the linguistic approach which emphasizes the mastery of words and sentences of the selected reading text. "The assumption is that if the learners can handle linguistic features of the text efficiently, reading ability will be improved" (page 348; see also section 3.22 above). Extracts from *Reading and Comprehension Course* (Sim and Laufer-Dvorkin 1982) and the earlier books of *Reading and Thinking in English* (Moore and others 1979/80) are taken to demonstrate this. It is stated that in the latter, the exercises are not overtly grammatical though they have a range of language-related exercises.

The third category is what Bloor calls the content-orientated approach. This is based on the view that "the *purpose* inherent in a particular act of reading is an essential feature" (page 351). The task of the course designer is to help the learner to learn to define his or her purpose for reading. "Content-orientated reading exercises sometimes provide the purpose for the reader by specifying a reason for reading a particular passage before actual reading takes place. In other cases, it is assumed that reading passages on topics related to learners' specific needs will fulfil their real-world purposes, and thus stimulate their interest and involvement in reading" (page 351). These assumptions are demonstrated by drawing sample exercises from *Reading for a Purpose* (Bloor and Grant 1978), *Reasons for Reading* (Davies and Whitney 1979), *Study Skills in English* (Wallace 1980), and *English Studies* series (Mackin 1971). It might be argued that although the reader's purpose, among other factors, determines how and what he or she reads, it might be difficult to produce reading materials incorporating all possible purposes of readers -

even academic purposes may be difficult to pin down due to individual differences in all respects (Dickinson 1987; Clark 1987). Learning or reading purpose, as such, is appropriately defined by the individual who is learning to read.

Bloor refers to the last category as the pedagogically-orientated approach, that is "when learning theories are the prime motivation for the design of the total *course* rather than the design of individual exercises" (page 355). These are reading courses which involve reading boxes or sets of reading cards and they are mostly designed for reading at the learner's own individual rate of progress. She mentions *Reading Choices* (Jolly 1982), which are specifically prepared for self-access work. She relates (from the Teacher's Book of the *Reading Choices*) that "textual difficulty for any individual student depends on a number of factors, not simply on those of lexical frequency and grammatical complexity. The same text may appear difficult to one student and easier to another often for no reasons than differences in motivation, previous knowledge of the topic or text type. These factors transcend mere linguistic description" (page 355). Bloor summarizes the theoretical assumptions of this approach as follows:

> readers who are given some choice in the selection of their own reading materials and who can develop at their own rates will be more successful readers than those whose programme of studies is directed by the teacher, the course book or the administrator.
>
> [Moreover] the interests of the students are best served if control of the reading activity is left in their hands (rather than in those of the teacher) with respect to choice of topic, text type, textual function, apparent difficulty *and* amount of help required in understanding texts. On the question of difficulty, Jolly's approach differs from that of some earlier sets of reading cards in that the cards are not graded in level from the point of view of language complexity, although they do vary in length and text type.

One significant point Bloor mentions about Jolly's approach is that the collections are not graded on the basis of linguistic factors as the ***SRA*** or other graded readers like ***ELSIP***. She adds that the exercises are varied and content-orientated but they remain as facilitators of the reading activity. In other words, they are, in effect, "superfluous to the objectives of allowing students the time and opportunity to read in English" (page 355). Bloor concludes by stating "it is claimed that courses which permit individuals to assume

responsibility for their own work also help the learners to a position of independence of the teacher, which is ultimately essential for any reading course since reading has to be an individual activity" (page 356).

Both the *SRA* and *ELSIP* reading collections make similar claims. As pointed out below (section 4.2224 and section 4.335, Chapter 4), both allow students to make their own choices from the collections and read as fast and as far as their learning rate and capacity allow. The *SRA* collection, in particular, is based on the following assumptions of the reading process:

> Reading consists of many skills. The student must learn to connect sight and sound to produce the visual recognition of letters, letter combinations, words, groups of words, and sentences. He must learn how to derive meaning from sentences, then from paragraphs, then from whole stories, articles, or textbook lessons. He must be able to use a systematic approach to reading and study, such as the SQ3R formula used in the READING LABORATORY [sic]. He should also be able to enjoy reading for pure pleasure, using whatever method he chooses - or no method at all (1985 Teacher's Book, Introduction).

In other words, the endeavour to relate reading activity to education objectives is the characteristic claim of the collections, although it may be mentioned that the serialist, bottom-up approach assumed towards reading in particular and learning in general seems to be somewhat assertive. The approach recommended for reading development is SQ3R (survey-question-review-read-recite) for all types of learners. Royer, Bates and Konold (1984:79) appreciate the effectiveness of inserted questions in reading texts to enhance reading ability and, by citing Keller, indicate the characteristic features similar to the SRA used by the personalized system of individualised instruction. In general, the features include the following. Firstly, "the instructional material is organized and sequenced into smaller units, and students are required to 'demonstrate mastery' by performing at or above some minimum achievement level before proceeding to subsequent units." Secondly, the material consists of almost entirely written textual information. Thirdly, lectures or demonstrations are mainly designed to maintain student interest and motivation and not explicitly for instructional purposes. Lastly, "students are ideally allowed to proceed through instructional units at their own pace, going as fast or as slow as their abilities or special needs dictate."

Despite its limitations, the collection contains several texts selected from a variety of books and periodicals containing a wide range of subjects such as science, biography, adventure, humour, fiction, folklore, ecology, history, sports and the like featuring a wide

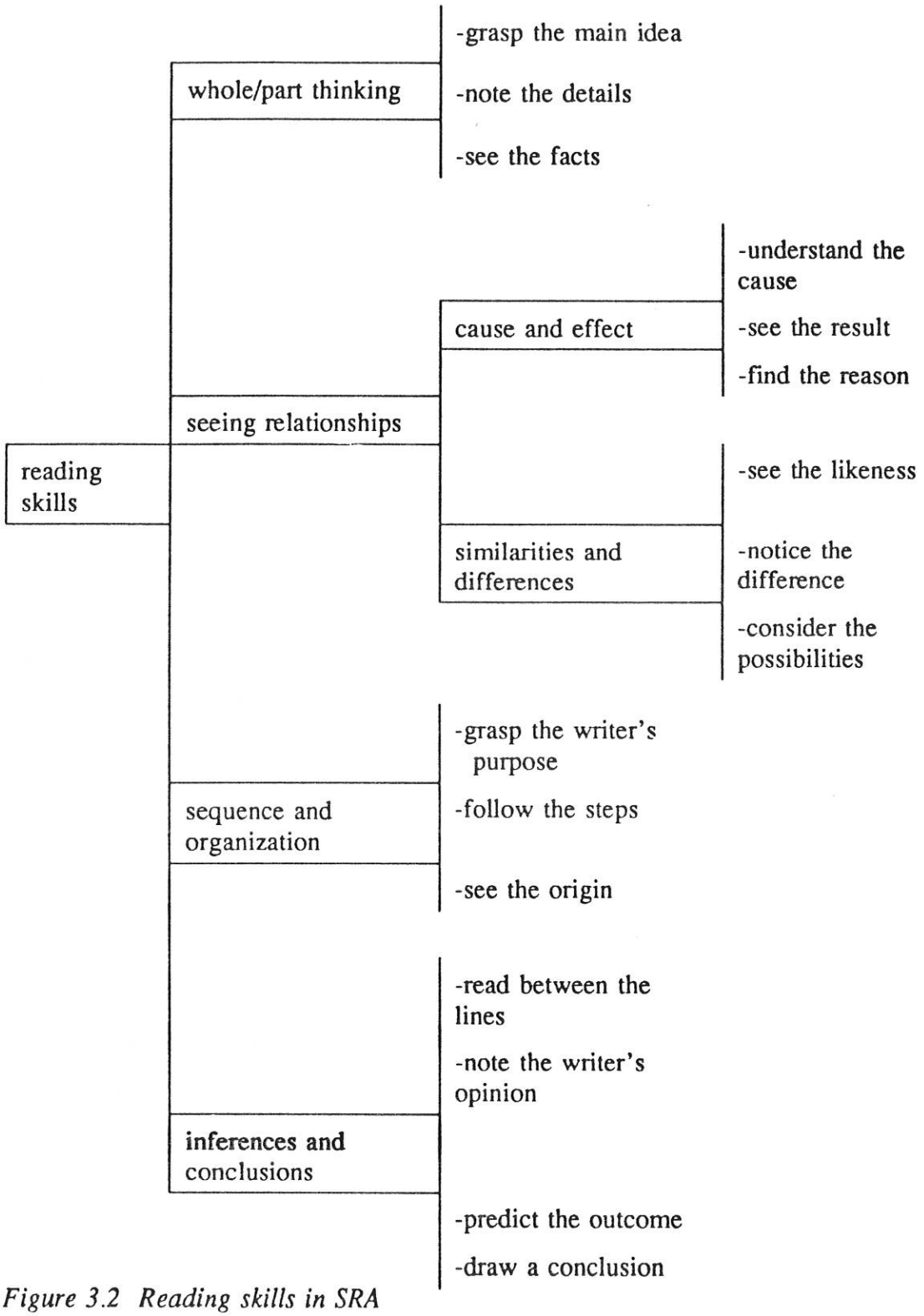

Figure 3.2 Reading skills in SRA

sampling of writing styles (page 9). Moreover, the authors claim that the "materials have been ranked on a continuum of difficulty from easy to hard according to the existing knowledge of the basic skills that make up the total skill of reading" (page 8). The authors, however, do not explicitly mention the criteria they have used to select and grade the materials. From the focus on vocabulary and structure development exercises, one may safely imagine that linguistic factors are decisive. The authors consider the reading process as consisting of subskills in a hierarchical manner as indicated in Figure 3.2 above.

The focus on developing the mentioned skills, which the authors recommend, has been taken by Baird and White (cited in Nisbet and Shucksmith 1986:71) as a discrepancy in the materials and they argue that "they do not ultimately give students the responsibility for their own learning - too many learners remain limited to following instructions and protocols" (see also comments given by students in the main study group, for instance, *str 3.1258*, *Appendix 3.12*).

However, as Robb and Susser (1989:243) indicate, the materials are more goal-orientated and suitable for developing reading through extensive reading which, according to Nuttal (1982:65) "is the single most effective way of improving both vocabulary and reading skills in general." Davies and Widdowson (1974) and Fawcett (1977, 1979) also claim that the materials are suitable for developing reading. Fawcett, after administering the materials on native speakers of English, reports significant improvement in learners' reading comprehension and adds that the materials should be used as the authors have prescribed. He states that "the groups using the Reading laboratory material made highly significant gains over the control groups, at all age levels in speed and accuracy of reading, development of vocabulary and the ability to comprehend. These gains were made initially, on completion of the intensive experimental programme, and maintained or even improved over the next six months (1977: abstract). Boey (1976), Eskey (1973) and Lynn (1972), however, doubt the effectiveness of these materials in developing reading comprehension. Eskey and Grabe (1988:230-231) doubt the effectiveness of the reading lab approach, which the SRA and ELSIP promote, and argue that the approach "presupposes a substantial library of materials, and, since there are no texts that every

student reads, it limits the kinds of group work that can be done and tends to isolate reading from other parts of the curriculum - or other shared experience. For students who are not strong self-motivators -who, for example, have not developed the habit of reading in depth in their own languages - this may be a major problem." They suggest the organization of a content-centred approach - that provides a "critical mass" of information on a subject that help to read about it extensively and integrate all the macro-skills of language - listening, reading, speaking and writing.

The ***ELSIP*** (English Language Self Instruction Package materials), unlike the ***SRA***, do not contain exercises on developing any explicit reading skill, though a claim is made that as one reaches *Level Four* of the graded readers published by various UK publishing companies, such as Collins, Longman, Heinmann, he/she will have achieved an approximate equivalent to a score of 500 on the *TOEFL* test (***ELSIP*** student guide). The ***ELSIP*** is a collection of graded readers not particularly different from earlier series of graded readers, except that it contains, as indicated in Table 4.4, Chapter 4 below, a series of progress tests after each level. Thus it shares all the characteristics of most graded readers from which it incorporated a substantial number of reading books. Bamford (1984:218-219), after having surveyed most of the graded readers recommended for use in schools, states that

> these are short books of fiction and non-fiction which are graded structurally and lexically - and occasionally in other ways. At lower levels, the books are usually purpose-written original titles. At higher levels, they are usually abridged and adapted from existing books. The levels are graded from beginner to advanced, and at each level the books are written using only the grammatical structures and vocabulary items appropriate to that level of study. This grading ostensibly ensures that learners can read with relative fluency without being overwhelmed by unfamiliar structure and vocabulary.

In addition, Bamford states that graded readers try to resemble textbooks or books that young readers would like to read for pleasure. They are usually controlled in structure, sentence length and complexity, vocabulary and "(rarely) the flow of information and the explicitness of background concepts and suppositions" (page 219).

In summary, texts for reading are selected by using various criteria, including the readability formulae and the cloze procedure but more significantly using word lists, like the Dale-Chall or Michael West, and sentence complexity. As has been stated, there are problems in establishing the levels of difficulty of words and sentences, and the mere use of frequency and length for word difficulty and length for sentence difficulty often yields inconclusive results (Bamford 1984).

3.2222 The reader

One fundamental issue that readability formulae seem to fail to include in the assessment of text difficulty is the reader variable. It is alleged that they separate text from its context and readership. Similarly, the cloze procedure, it is alleged, is mainly limited to short passages.

However, a number of researchers who used the graded readers described above, claim reader successes (Hafiz and Tudor 1989, 1990; Elley and Mangubhai 1983; Robb and Susser 1989), despite the limitations of graded readers mentioned above. Elley and Mangubhai (1983:61), in particular, state that, by giving Fijian school children a large number of high-interest story books in English, and by conducting this experiment for over two years, they claim to have found that the children in the experimental group improved their "general reading comprehension skill at over twice the normal rate."

Similarly, Robb and Susser (1989) describe an experiment comparing the improvement of reading comprehension by Japanese college freshmen taught by either a skills-based or extensive reading procedure and they assert that their results suggest what they labelled as extensive reading procedure may be at least as effective as skills building with the additional advantage that the extensive reading procedure is more motivating. This casts the usual doubt as to whether it is the nature of the texts or the long-term effect of the learners' use of the materials or, more significantly, the predispositions of the readers that has brought about the claimed change. As Williams and Moran (1989:220; also implied in Bloor's, 1985, assessment of EFL reading materials, especially in her fourth category) state

> one of the effects of a more learner-centred pedagogy in EFL reading has been to focus less upon a text, and more upon the reader. Although this concern has been evident in the research literature, the evidence from published material suggests that it has proved difficult to incorporate all aspects of research findings into material for EFL learner readers.

Admittedly, what has proved to be more difficult than this is the research findings themselves are inconclusive and the claims made by some researchers cannot be substantiated. One type of approach pursued to explain the reading process (and whose findings are used to develop reading courses for EFL contexts, such as the types mentioned by Bloor, 1985, above, and the ***SRA***, as depicted above in Figure 3.2) is the skills approach to developing EFL reading.

The skills approach to reading is informed by research on the analysis of the subskills of reading. Typical taxonomies of reading skills include that of Barrett (1968), Davies and Widdowson (1974), Adams-Smith (1981), and possibly, Royer, Konold and Bates (1984). Brown and Hirst (1983:138-139) reject the idea that reading is a skill "comprising a number of discrete subskills, which can be differentiated and described and therefore perhaps taught and tested. Instead, they support Lunzer and Gardner (1979) by claiming that individual differences in reading comprehension "reflect only one general aptitude: this being the pupil's ability and willingness to reflect on whatever he is reading." Likewise, Alderson and Urquhart (1984) find the skills-approach to the analysis of reading raises far more and complicated questions than the answers it provides about the reading process. The claim that types the reading process as consisting of a series of discrete subskills is unsubstantiated by research. Lunzer and Gardner (1979) fail to establish the existence of separate subskills. "They could not find, for instance, readers who could make inferences and do lower tasks, but could not make judgements about what they were reading" (Alderson and Urquhart 1984:xvii).

Another point raised by Alderson and Urquhart is related to the way researchers establish the reading skills. They state that "the skills approach typically proceeds by giving subjects tests on their understanding of passages, yet doing a comprehension test and actually reading are probably not the same thing" (page xvii). Moreover, testing the

comprehension level of a learner may not be an appropriate indication of how the learner has achieved this level or has not achieved another. This is by no means an appropriate clue to help the teacher of reading to plan strategies to help his or her students to reach the next level (although this is the major assumption underlying the placement tests in SRA and the graded readers such as ELSIP). Alderson and Urquhart also argue that the levels established by administering reading comprehension tests are indicative of the *product* of reading, or the outcome of understanding, rather than the *process* of reading. They argue that

> a description of what the student has understood of a text is not the same as a description of how he arrives at such an understanding. The product of reading may vary in terms of levels of meaning and comprehension, but it does not follow that the levels of comprehension reflect different skills. It is at least possible that readers use similar *processes* for getting at different *products* (page xviii).

Another point of contention against the skills-approach to the study of the process of reading is that even the product of reading is affected by reader variables - such as background knowledge (Carrell 1988), cultural knowledge (Steffensen and Joag-Dev 1984), the ability to prompt appropriate background knowledge (Bransford, Stein and Shelton 1984), or subject or content background knowledge (Alderson and Urquhart 1988; Mohammed and Swales 1984). Apparently, these reader variables affect his or her product of reading and, possibly, the process of reading. Readers' purpose and motivation have the same, if not more, effect on the product or outcome of understanding. Royer, Bates and Konold (1984) confirm that a reader's purpose (not a teacher's or a material writer's purpose, though this may affect the outcome) affects his/her outcome of understanding. Fransson (1984) indicates, despite the experimenter's attempts to manipulate purpose (however, this is one of the guidelines used to develop EFL reading materials, as pointed out by Bloor, 1985), readers' motivation has an overriding effect on both the process and product of reading (Elley and Mangubhai 1983; Frankel 1982). This is also confirmed by Olshavsky (1977) and Elley (1984).

Lastly, Alderson and Urquhart argue that the skills-approach to the study of reading is based on the traditional assumption that "texts have predictable meanings, which can be

extracted if only the reader is sufficiently skilful" (page xix).

In conclusion, while not denying the relevance of *product* for various purposes, Alderson and Urquhart argue, the overemphasis on the *product* at the expense of the *process* may not give the true picture of the reading act. Research has concentrated more on *product* than on *process*. They state that emphasizing the aspect of process in reading has valuable pedagogical implications.

> the value of concentrating on process in research and teaching is that if *processes* can be characterized, they may contain elements that are general across different texts, that learners can learn in order to improve their reading. The basic rationale behind attempts to describe *process* is that an understanding should lead to the possibility of distinguishing the processing of successful and unsuccessful readers. This in turn should lead to the possibility of teaching the strategies, or process components, of successful readers to unsuccessful ones, or at least making the latter aware of the existence of other strategies, which they might wish to try for themselves (page xix).

Though one may concur with their statement that the process of reading is elusive and difficult to pin down to concrete realization, Alderson and Urquhart do not explicitly indicate, at least in the above work, that learning by itself is a process and the relationship between teaching and learning a controversial issue. It is argued that teaching and learning may not have cause and effect relationship (see 1.12 Chapter 1; Allwright 1984). Their suggestion seems not to include the aspect of individual differences. What works for one to be a successful reader may not be helpful for another (Dickinson 1987). It might also be argued that product, as an outcome of process, has some valid indicative value.

3.2223 Text-reader interaction

Alderson and Urquhart recommend the study of the process of reading rather than the product of reading, and this approach subsumes the analysis of the interaction between the reader and the text. The study of the interaction may yield some recurring *styles, skills* and *strategies* of reading of the target population. As Williams and Moran (1989) state,

one cause for misunderstanding in the argument has been the use of the same words to imply different concepts. And this is true with the terms *styles, skills* and *strategies.* Alderson and Urquhart take *skills* and *strategies* as referring to different concepts (see the above quotation), while Nuttal (1985:199) takes them as synonymous. The component *skills* mentioned by Grabe (1991, above, section 3.221) and *skills* in the sense used by Alderson and Urquhart may imply different aspects. When used to imply different aspects of reading

> one may distinguish the terms by defining a skill as an acquired ability, which has been automatised and operates largely sub-consciously, whereas strategy is a conscious procedure carried out in order to solve a problem. ... Thus a fluent reader may possess the skill of rapid, automatic word recognition, but may resort to strategies such as phonological encoding when faced with an unfamiliar word (Williams and Moran 1989:223).

Nisbet and Shucksmith (1986:6) refer to strategies as "integrated sequences of procedures selected with a purpose in view." Another common term employed in reference to reader-text interaction is *style.* While strategies imply a conscious effort on the part of the reader, styles seem to refer to learned habits. In other words, styles denote readers' behavioural response to text. As instances of learning styles, Wilson(1981:18) observes that some learners appear "to have mainly a 'reproductive' or rote learning conception of study in which learning is equated to 'committing to memory'; others study with a view to extracting meaning from what they read and relating general relationship between quantitative and qualitative conception of learning principles to their current stock of ideas and personal representations of reality." Reading style may also be related to learners' experience with reading. Grabe (1991) points out that more often researchers of EFL reading do not try to find out the extent of literacy skills of students in their first language. This is usually taken for granted.

> Assuming that students have relatively similar reading skills in their first languages, a further question can be posed: To what extent do students use, interpret, or value reading material in their first language? Students who come from cultures where written material represents "truth" might tend not to challenge or reinterpret texts in light of other texts, but will tend to memorize "knowledge." Students who have not had easy access to libraries might be less likely to look for alternative sources of information or question the relative strengths and weaknesses of the texts they encounter. Students who come from communities with limited

> literacy among the population may downplay the importance of literacy skills and do little extensive reading....In sum, the social context of students' uses of reading in their first languages, and their access to texts, may have a profound effect on their abilities to develop academic reading skills in English (Grabe 1991:389).

Grabe's description could be envisaged to imply a number of crucial elements in reading and learning to read in L2 in EFL contexts. Firstly, it would be wrong to assume that students, coming as they do from different cultural and linguistic settings coupled with the educational problems (section 2.2 Chapter 2; section 3.1 above) and with many languages without any writing system (section 2.1 and section 2.2 Chapter 2 above), would have similar reading or literacy skills in their first languages. The general consensus is that many students do not read in their first languages. They have not developed the skill of reading and they do not possess a strong reading background and the "critical mass of knowledge" (Grabe 1986) to cope with the demands of reading in English for academic purposes. There is also a significant variation in students' ability to operate in English.

Secondly, to relate this to the earlier contention, raised by Alderson and Urquhart (1984), when he mentions literacy skills, Grabe might be referring to the macro-skill of reading or even to learning to read. The term 'skills' can also be extended to include skills in learning to read in English as a foreign language for specific purposes. This qualification may involve the 'strategies' students employ to learn to read or to read to learn their academic courses in English.

One may wonder whether it would not be appropriate, for practical purposes, to assume the notions of 'style', 'skills', and 'strategies' to lie on a continuum whereby the two ends are represented by, on one side, the unconscious or, possibly, subconscious (that has become automatic) and, on the other, the conscious or deliberate without denying the fact that they are organically related. The unconscious would embody the 'styles' learned through different forms of exposure and fostering themselves as habits, such as eye movements, regression, vocalization, speed, or skipping texts (Williams and Moran 1989). Nuttal (1982) and Grellet (1981) consider skimming, scanning, intensive reading and extensive reading as styles. This inclusion may be acceptable if these are considered in

behavioural terms, such as which a reader resorts to suit his/her purpose, background knowledge, and the like. The conscious would signify all deliberate actions that readers take to tackle the task of reading or learning to read.

It has been pointed out that Nuttal (1982) takes 'skills' and 'strategies' as synonymous. Others would prefer to use skills to refer to assumed discrete categories of reading, such as the ones mentioned in Figure 3.2 above. Williams and Moran (1989:223) state that the skills categories are related to language-related and reason-related skills. They also distinguish 'skills' and 'strategies' by qualifying a 'skill' as an "acquired ability which has been automatised and operates largely subconsciously" (compare this with the notion of component 'skills' mentioned by Grabe in section 3.221, this chapter). A 'strategy', according to Williams and Moran, is a "conscious procedure carried out in order to solve a problem." In other words a reader may have the skill of "rapid, automatic word recognition" and he/she may employ strategies such as "phonological encoding when faced with an unfamiliar word." This might be considered as a narrow definition of strategies.

From a broader perspective, and by taking into account the various learning strategies students in EFL contexts employ, strategies should be defined to reflect these conscious activities - activities not only for solving problems but also finding the course of one's own learning to read in L2. Rubin (1987:19) considers 'strategies' as "any set of operations, steps, plans, routines used by the learner to facilitate the obtaining, storage, retrieval and use of information, ...that is, what learners *do* to learn and *do to regulate* their learning." This assumption is drawn from the studies on metacognition and reading mentioned above, section 3.221, this chapter.

This definition shifts the emphasis from the notion of whether reading is made up of subskills or not to the fluent reader, who sets the process of reading in motion by actively interacting with the text - the interaction realized by the use of appropriate strategies - to invest meaning on it. Such a construct for strategies will not only be applied to the process of reading but also to the process of learning to read in a foreign language. In a nut-shell, as Nisbet and Shucksmith (1986:6) indicate, strategies can be contrived to refer to

> integrated sequences of procedures selected with a purpose in view, and successful learners have developed a range of strategies from which they are able to select appropriately and adapt flexibly to meet the needs of a specific situation. To do this, they need to be aware of what they are doing and of their own learning style, and to monitor their learning so as to be able to make appropriate decisions and to switch their choice if it appears to be ineffective . Thus successful learners are more likely to be those who are fine-tuned to the complexities of their learning style, who are perceptive of the requirements in learning, and who have developed a range of strategies which they can apply according to their own style.

This assumption takes learners as active participants in their learning to read or reading to learn. As Stern (1987:xii) points out, by qualifying 'strategies' in this manner, it is admitted that "learners are active, task-oriented, and approach their language learning with certain assumptions and beliefs which have bearing on the way they tackle the new language." Pedagogically, it also implies that learners can be given the responsibility for their learning which will enable them to experiment with their learning strategies, and/ or assume new ones to develop their reading ability - by exposing themselves to reading materials that are interesting and not too difficult to cope with, and interacting with other learners and the teacher (Frankel 1982).

3.3 Individualisation: An approach to reading instruction in EAP

In summing up his review of current research trends in L2 reading, Grabe (1991) states that reading is an interactive process and the ability to read cannot be developed by a single means. He suggests several guidelines for reading instruction in L2 without forgetting to underline the fact that students learn to read by reading. Some of his guidelines include using a reading lab to provide individualised instruction as well as practice in reading skills and strategies; fostering sustained silent reading to build fluency and automaticity, confidence and appreciation of reading; giving priority to certain identified effective reading skills and strategies for practice; fostering group work and co-operative learning, and encouraging extensive reading.

These guidelines, especially in EFL contexts, do not only encourage learner participation in the process of developing reading abilities in L2 but they will also allow the learner

to be a master of his/ her own learning. The learner learns to manage his/ her learning tasks in a way that is unique to his/ her needs and capacities (Brookes and Grundy 1988; Riley 1987; Allwright 1984). It is assumed that, based on earlier research findings regarding their effectiveness in engendering successful learning in reading (Davies and Widdowson 1974; Fawcett 1977, 1979; Robb and Susser 1989), the ***SRA*** materials and the graded readers (Bamford 1984), such as the ***ELSIP***, (as pointed out in section 1, Chapter 1; section 3.221, this chapter; and section 4.2 and section 4.3, Chapter 4) can provide the necessary exposure for the learners to try their reading strategies and assume new ones and to facilitate for learners to acquire the "critical mass" of knowledge essential for effective academic reading (Grabe 1986).

The materials facilitate learning through experience and meaningful interaction. As Littlejohn and Windeatt (1989:171) point out, "one may make stronger claims for a learning outcome that is arrived at experientially than for one arrived at referentially," that is, the learner is likely to gain more through what he or she does or is required to do in the given materials rather than the content of the materials (Jolly cited in Bloor 1985), or more significantly, what the learner wants to do with the materials. Experiential learning can be characterized as follows:

> It has *a quality of personal involvement* - the whole person in both feeling and cognitive aspects being in the learning event. It is *self-initiated.* Even when the impetus or stimulus comes from the outside, the sense of discovery, of reaching out, of grasping and comprehending comes from within. It is *pervasive.* It makes a difference in the behaviour, the attitudes, perhaps even the personality of the learner. It is *evaluated by the learner.* She knows whether it is meeting her need, whether it leads towards what she *wants* to know, whether it illuminates the dark area of ignorance she is experiencing. The locus of evaluation, we might say, resides definitely in the learner. Its essence is *meaning.* When such learning takes place, the element of meaning to the learner is built into the whole experience. (Rogers 1983:20).

Some researchers may disagree with the above stipulation describing it as untestable and elusive. However, learning as a process is also elusive; it cannot be pinned down to discrete elements. If the major objective of education is not merely to impart knowledge through 'telling' or 'lecturing', as is the normal practice in Addis Ababa University rather

than the exception (see section 2.7, Chapter 2 above; Abebe 1987), but to equip learners with the effective means to pursue knowledge (as stipulated in the objectives of higher education in Ethiopia), this could be effectively realized by facilitating learner involvement in learning. Learners do not cram so called facts if they are encouraged to enhance their awareness of learning through involvement. However, all teaching approaches, albeit the few traditional ones, claim some form of learner involvement in one way or another with differing degrees of emphasis or attention given to the learner.

According to Holec (1980), tendencies in language pedagogy (in accordance with progress in research in such areas as functions of language, psychology of learning, and teaching methodology) reflect three broad categories of approaches. The first category includes all those approaches which try to increase the efficiency of the learning process by improving teaching methods. For instance, Widdowson (1990:114) qualifies a desirable teaching approach as an approach which "recognizes the necessary contrivance of pedagogy and seeks to guide learners through graded negotiating tasks. These would require them to take bearing on both systemic and schematic knowledge and would shift the focus of procedural work in a controlled way."

The second category includes those approaches that attempt to adapt the teaching of a specific language to the type of learning public - teaching language for specific public use, such as nursing, cooking, and the like. This category focuses mostly on the specification of the content of language learning to meet public demands. Learner characteristics and needs are also taken into consideration. Thus, the various English language courses for specific purposes, generally grouped under ESP, fall in this category.

The last category, suggested by Holec, consists of those approaches that attempt to improve learning both qualitatively and quantitatively by involving learners and enhancing their participation through training them to learn how to learn. Learner training is a broad feature. It could mean training learners in things like clarification - the learner asks, for instance, the meaning of a word, a sentence, etc - (Rubin 1981); how to go about learning the language (Wenden 1983); how to manage one's own learning, that is, understanding the conditions that help one learn and creating these conditions (O'Malley and others

1985); or even learning how to organize self and group assessment of written work (Dickinson 1987).

By taking into consideration the above cited sources, Dickinson (1988:49; see also Holec 1980:31 for a similar definition) qualifies learner training by including all the possibilities of learner training types he has studied. He states that learner training is "training in all those (potentially conscious) self-instructional processes, strategies, and activities which may be used in autonomous learning in a conventional classroom; and instruction aimed to heighten the learner's awareness of language and of the process of language learning." This definition includes the concept of learner involvement and the procedures of learner training used in this study (section 4.23 and section 4.342 Chapter 4 for the modes of study of the study groups) to help learners develop their reading ability to cope with their academic studies.

Similarly, Allwright (1988), and Allwright and Bailey (1991) have compiled data from conventional classroom language lessons that indicate active learner involvement, fostering itself in ways unique to the individual learners and their attempts to individualize the language lessons (thus, claiming learner autonomy) despite the teacher's attempts to impose her bit of a language syllabus, methodology and learning atmosphere. Allwright (1988) claims that these data gathered from actual classroom language lessons testify, however not exploited by language teachers, learners' attempts to individualize instruction and direct learning the way it suits them. "All learners' questions can be looked upon as autonomous moves to achieve that effect" (1988:37). Thus, individualisation and autonomy are not strange features even to conventional language classes.

Individualised instruction is one way of responding to these language class phenomena. However, this approach is understood by different researchers in different ways. As Dickinson (1987:10-11) points out

> individualised instruction is used, by different writers, in ways that place it at both ends of the scale of responsibility for learning. That is, some others use it to describe situations where the learners are provided with specially prepared materials into which are built many of the management controls usually operated by the teacher. Others use individualised instruction to describe learning situations

for which I would use the terms self-directed learning or autonomous learning.

In fact, Dickinson argues that individualised instruction, as an end by itself, does not offer very much independence to the learner though an attempt is made to respond to individual differences. As indicated in the above citation, in an educational system characterized by reconstructionism or the ends-means approach adopted as an educational value system (Clark 1987), individualisation involves the introduction of contract schemes whereby learners are expected to "pace themselves through a predetermined set of tasks, in a predetermined way, towards prespecified learning outcomes" (Clark 1987:19). Apparently, the focus is on adapting predetermined learning tasks - as specified by policy makers, educators, teachers, etc. (Logan 1973; Disick 1975) - to identified individual differences (see Clark 1987; Dickinson 1987; Skehan 1989, for a discussion of individual differences that constrain learning).

According to this conception of individualisation, learning is assumed to be effective by merely adapting the procedure of presentation of an already specified set of facts or set of discrete elements (especially, language elements, whether they are structural items, functions or notions or skills). This assumption does not give due emphasis to learners' active contribution to the teaching-learning process (though it is crucial for learning to occur, and as Allwright (1988) argues, the attempt by learners to individualise learning is inevitable but not exploited); nor does it indicate what the learner is going to do with the items to be learned. It has been argued that fluency in reading is achieved through learner contribution and interaction, but it is not necessary to depend on prespecified reading tasks and texts for reading to develop reading fluency. It is assumed that genuine interaction - the process of imbuing texts with meaning - can be fostered when the learner reader is given some responsibility for his or her learning and choice of learning materials, rather than someone determining the choices for him or her - these choices might not even be appropriate to the learner (Geddes and Sturtridge 1982).

The rationale for 'abdicating' at least some of the responsibility to learners is based on the following contention. Firstly, when learners take control of their own learning, learning becomes effective because they only learn what they are ready to learn - based

on motivation, purpose, background knowledge, and the like.

Secondly, learners who are used to taking responsibility for their learning are likely to carry on learning outside the classroom as well - essential for developing both their schematic and systemic knowledge to cope with academic reading. No approach of language teaching or a contrived set of language teaching materials can claim to equip learners with all the critical mass of knowledge, or schematic and systemic knowledge, essential for developing fluency in reading in English for academic purposes; and the attempt to do as such becomes much more difficult in FL contexts. Lastly, if learners are given the responsibility for their learning, they are likely to transfer these effective learning strategies, possibly appropriate only for them, to study their academic texts - considered as the major objective of the service English courses in the university (Ellis and Sinclair 1989).

Allwright (1982:24) prefers to envisage individualisation as something "*learners* may do, given the opportunity, to get whatever they want from a learning situation." Similarly, Carver and Dickinson (1982) define the self-directed learner as one who assumes the responsibility for the aims and objectives of the course, monitors its development, assesses himself and takes an active part in the learning. This may be assumed as the extreme end of the definition provided by Dickinson above. In fact, it may be considered as undesirable, among some circles and in some places, due to the fact that it goes contrary to established educational and cultural norms (Riley 1988). As Tumposky (1982:5) argues, "it is not unreasonable to suppose that a strong clash in philosophies of learning may have a demotivating effect especially in cultures with a traditional respect for authority, unless such changes in roles occur at the same time as a change in the overall educational philosophy of a given culture."

It is admitted that socio-cultural norms and values constrain the prevailing educational philosophy and even the day-to-day teaching learning activities. This fear has manifested itself, though in a different form, when the current study was in full session (section 1.4, Chapter 1; section 2.4, Chapter 2; section 4.1 and section 4.3, Chapter 4).

However, it can be argued, following Allwright (1988:39-40), that most language classes contain an element of individualisation and autonomy - as reflected in learner involvement and interaction determining, in most cases, the course of the language lessons. In other words,

> we should not overlook the possibility that the seeds of 'autonomy' and 'individualisation' are to be found even in apparently inhospitable soil of whole-class instruction, and that if we do find these seeds there then we can, without straining our ingenuity greatly, think of ways of nurturing them, and of giving them a chance not merely to survive but perhaps even to thrive.

3.4 Conclusion

It is apparent that the emphasis on language instruction (mostly structural) in the service English courses in Addis Ababa University is based on the assumption that better language instruction would result in increased reading achievement. It has also been established (section 2.6, Chapter 2) that social science first year students have a reading problem, thus an apparent justification for aiming to help students read better, which is tied to the first assumption. However, the research establishing whether it is specifically a linguistic or a reading problem is scanty. Elsewhere, research trends in this area have focused on assessing empirical data to establish plausible explanations to these basic issues: whether limited proficiency in a foreign language constrains general reading ability in that language -- thus implying the necessity for effective language instruction; whether limited proficiency in a foreign language restrict readers from utilizing specific textual information when reading in the language; and whether there is a 'threshold' of linguistic competence or what Grabe (1986) in general terms as the 'critical mass' of knowledge readers should possess before they can read successfully in the given language (Devine 1988).

Alderson (1984:24) states cautiously (because of the inconclusive research findings available) that the problem of reading in a foreign language is "both a language problem and a reading problem, but with firmer evidence that it is a language problem, for low levels of foreign language competence, than a reading problem" although this by no

implies that there is no reading problem. In a situation where students have not had adequate exposure to written materials in English, Frankel (1982) and Elley (1984) suggest the use of several interesting reading materials for a long time, and imply that reading may function to increase language proficiency as well. Similarly, Swaffar and others (1991:43) indicate the symbiotic relationship between foreign language reading and linguistic ability as follows:

> for the L2 reader, proficiency problems activate controlled processing, conscious attention to words and letters. The preferable alternative is automatic processing. When vocabulary meaning is instantaneously recognized (i.e., processed automatically without the conscious effort of the reader), comprehension is faster. The less time spent on an effort to remember individual words, the more memory is available to attend to other meaning factors. ... Hence a lack of proficiency in language mechanics inhibits text comprehension. Without some automatic processing the reader is unable to allocate attention to context factors (schema) and the "chunking" or nucleation presumed necessary for recall.

It has been established that reading is an interactive process for which the reader needs at least a minimal or critical mass of knowledge (or schematic and systemic knowledge) to negotiate meaning. This critical mass of knowledge or background knowledge or, possibly, the 'knowledge of the world in the head' (according to Smith 1982), according to schema theory of learning, can expand and develop or can be modified through experiential learning. It is also noted that the essential mass of knowledge for reading in ESL/EFL contexts seems to be significantly constrained by linguistic factors (that is, knowledge of the English language). However, it is argued that these factors cannot be reduced to the knowledge of discrete structural elements. Moreover, the knowledge of a language does not necessarily make learners better readers as evinced by the common observation that many native speakers are not good readers (Bloor 1985). The writer's underlying assumptions (socio-cultural and linguistic aspects), the knowledge of the process of reading, and the purpose and capacity to utilize textual constraints determine successful learning to read and reading to learn. This explains the possible reason why the teaching of language - based on structures, functions or notions, skills - may not necessarily engender effective reading. Allen (1986) states that reading problems in ESL situations can be tackled by providing students with functionally simplified texts (such as those that appear in the *Focus* Series) that help them to focus on the rules of the discourse

used. Although it is acknowledged that this approach has its own merits - the emphasis on meaning rather than on discrete structural items - it does not give prominence to the individual learner's meaning generating capacity in his/her interaction with texts. The quality and depth of interaction largely depends on individual differences. The Series does not seem to accommodate this and it tends to be rather prescriptive.

Another trend in this sphere is the attempt to incorporate all possible assumptions about the reading process in teaching materials (Frankel 1982; Elley and Mangubhai 1983). However, this may not give the individual reader the choice to learn to read in a way it is relevant to him/her. Thus one criticism that can be made about the extensive reading programmes cited above (Hafiz and Tudor 1989; Robb and Susser 1989) is that they tend to ascribe the successes in reading as manifested in learners' linguistic performance more to the quantity, or even quality, of the reading materials provided than to the active learner involvement motivated by assumed successful learning outcomes and advantages; learners read these materials and become successful readers probably because they, as individual learners, have seen them as appropriate materials to serve their purpose of satisfying their lacks. Some may concentrate on vocabulary learning; others may enjoy reading the content (***Appendix 3.1***). Teachers and teaching materials alone cannot make learners establish learning purposes that have individual import though they may play a significant role in facilitating the process. As Jolly points out (cited in Bloor 1985) materials, however well-designed, have a limited role to play in developing reading competence. Learning to read can be successful when the learner has been given the chance in the choice of materials, the definition and realization of learning purposes and the exercise and modification of learned strategies. As Rubin (1987:17-18) contends, "learning is best achieved when the students play an active role in the process." In other words, active learning is a situation in which students have the opportunities to internalize information in ways which are meaningful to them." In addition to this, "the learning environment must provide ideas and experiences as well as opportunities to work through them." In a nut-shell, the effective processing of a text or efficient reading as an interactive process requires appropriate background knowledge. Background knowledge can be envisaged as all the essentials - both acquired and learned - needed for processing information by the reader. The requisite knowledge for the processing of a given text, for

instance, is dependent upon individual differences. It is argued that this knowledge can best be developed by the individual learner himself/herself in the process of learning through discovery. In other words, "the learner should discover, with or without the help of other learners or teachers the knowledge and the techniques which he needs as he tries to find the answers to the problems with which he is faced. By proceeding largely by trial and error he trains himself progressively" (Holec 1980:42) and develops his background knowledge to help him to effectively cope with the tasks of reading in English for academic purposes. It is argued that one way of realizing this is through individualised reading in English for academic purposes outlined in the succeeding chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

Research design and methodology

4.1 Introduction

As indicated above, the major concern of the research is to make an exploratory study of a possible approach to reading instruction that would help first year social science students to develop their ability to read in English for academic purposes. Various research findings confirm that there is a gap between students' reading comprehension ability and the readability of their course books or the general linguistic and academic requirements of Addis Ababa University (section 2.6 Chapter 2). The current service English courses seem to be not successful in enabling students to bridge this gap to a significant degree although originally the courses were introduced to achieve this purpose (Jarvis 1969; Mosback 1977). It is stated that this gap is created because students do not possess the *critical mass of knowledge* essential for effective reading in English for academic purposes (section 3.3 Chapter 3; Eskey and Grabe 1988).

It is indicated that this essential mass of knowledge, or background knowledge, constitutes knowledge of content of a given text, the reading process and reading strategies, and the knowledge of the language (Smith 1982). This is sometimes summarised as content and formal schemata (Carrell 1988), or schematic and systemic knowledge (Widdowson 1990). Second language reading researchers mention that the development of these schemata, or knowledge structures, is essential for reading comprehension. Admittedly, the researchers differ in the degree of emphasis they give to the different aspects of systemic and schematic knowledge essential for reading. Without forgetting the fact that most reading theories are based on first language reading, it is claimed that reading is defined as either a bottom-up or data driven (starting with the printed stimuli working up to higher levels) (section 3.211 Chapter 3), a top-down or concept driven (the process of making predictions and confirming them by utilizing

minimal stimuli from the print) (Smith 1982; section 3.212 Chapter 3), or as an interactive process where all the parts (both reader and text factors) interact (Carrell 1988; section 3.213 Chapter 3). All three conceptions of reading presuppose the essential role of background knowledge in fluent reading, though with different degrees of emphasis. Other researchers in the field of cognitive psychology, for instance, have concentrated on the study of the component skills of fluent L1 reading (Grabe 1991). The two most prominent fields of study in this area that this study has depended upon are automaticity in fluent reading and metacognitive knowledge of reading. It has been indicated above (section 3.221 Chapter 3) that second language readers should develop automaticity at the feature, letter or, more important, at the word level to be able to read fluently. As some researchers argue, the reading problems of most second language readers is not because they cannot predict but they have not developed the automaticity at the lower levels (Eskey and Grabe 1988). It is believed that extensive reading encourages readers to develop automaticity at the word level. However, it is beyond the scope of this study to verify whether it is automaticity or prediction that explain fluent reading at other levels, say sentence levels (Grabe 1991 supplies a list of reading on this issue). Similarly, some researchers claim that reading can be viewed from the reader's knowledge about cognition and the self-regulation of cognition (Baker and Brown 1984; Garner 1987; Carrell 1989). In other words, researchers confirm that good readers employ metacognitive skills more effectively than poor readers (Hosenfeld 1984). Thus, it is argued that learner training in reading in English should involve training learners in metacognitive skills (as pointed out in section 3.221 Chapter 3). However, the current study is limited in scope to involve an extensive training in metacognitive skills although it is believed that the learner training sessions involving these skills could promote learners' fluency in reading in English for academic purposes (Carrell 1989b; Rubin 1981; Ellis and Sinclair 1989; Dickinson 1988).

Thus, it is believed that first year social science students could be helped greatly to be effective readers in English for academic purposes if the selected approach to reading instruction is based on the following theoretical stipulations:

(a) first year social science students need to be helped to develop their background knowledge (knowledge of the content, the reading process and knowledge of the

language, and most important, the capacity to employ all this knowledge for a specific purpose) (Carrell 1989b) in order to be fluent readers. It is argued that no language instruction, however elaborately it might be planned, can be a substitute for the efforts learners make to learn to acquire the *critical mass of knowledge* for reading in English for academic purposes. Language instruction may have a facilitative role in engendering independent learning but, as indicated above, teaching does not necessarily result in the learning of the specifically taught items. It is argued that teaching can only be effective in helping learners to identify the *tools* of learning, but it cannot cause learning (Riley 1987).

(b) the *critical mass of knowledge* required for effective reading in English for academic purposes is dependent on individual differences. In other words, first year social science students are assumed to have varying schematic and systemic knowledge due to a multitude of factors such as socio-cultural and linguistic background (section 2.3 Chapter 2), the nature and degree of learning exposure (section 2.3 Chapter 2), language learning aptitude, preferred learning styles and strategies, and the like (Dickinson 1987). It is difficult to know *what* and *how much* is required of each learner (in light of the fact that he/she comes to the learning situation with some background knowledge) so that he/she could read the academic course books with an adequate level of comprehension (section 3.3221 for problems in assessing text readability; section 5.1 Chapter 5 for the difficulties in defining the gap). It would be misleading to assume that (i) what is required of each learner for successful reading in English for academic purposes at the first year level is the same, and (ii) this is exclusively linguistic, as the service English course books seem to indicate.

(c) if the fundamental aim of the service English courses is to help learners to cope with their academic courses, they have to prove to be equally useful to all learners in facilitating the realisation of the fundamental educational objectives of the university (section 2.4 Chapter 2). In other words, the courses have to be redesigned in a way all learners benefit from the lessons. Learners should be able to gain something from the lessons to enhance their background knowledge that

is considered to be essential for effective reading in English for academic purposes. In other words, as stated in (b) above, they have to have relevance to each individual learner - they have to be facilitative and not restrictive or limiting, as they are in their present form (Dickinson 1987; section 1.1 Chapter 1).

(d) one possible way of meeting individual learners' needs is encouraging learners to *learn how to learn* - reorientating them to have a different view of learning, different from the one they are used to (section 1.12 Chapter 1). As Dickinson (1987:34) points out, learning how to learn involves developing knowledge about learning processes (as well as about oneself as a learner), planning learning, and discovering and using effective and preferred reading strategies to achieve specified objectives. It is argued that learners should have the knowledge of the reading process before they are able to develop their own preferred reading strategies for defined purposes (section 1.23 Chapter 1; section 3.221 Chapter 3). Basically, learner training can be envisaged as training learners to learn how to learn (Ellis and Sinclair 1989), or, in the context of the subject of the present study, to train first year students to learn to read their academic courses in English.

Based on the above, this study has been designed to explore the effectiveness of a possible approach to reading instruction for academic purposes. It has taken into consideration the objective realities of the country in general and the specific conditions of Addis Ababa University in particular (section 2.3, section 2.5 and section 2.6 Chapter 2 above). It also endeavours to encourage students to develop their background knowledge in a way that is suited to each individual learner and allows them to progress in their learning starting from where they are and employing what they have. It strives not to prescribe any learning style or strategy, but builds on what learners have and leaves most of the learning decisions of *what* and *how* to learn to the learners themselves (Dickinson 1987; Geddes and Sturtridge 1982; Allwright 1982). It is hypothesized that through individualised reading, as a major component of independent learning, students will achieve a significant improvement in their reading comprehension and linguistic abilities, and, in particular, they will learn and employ appropriate and effective reading

strategies for academic purposes -appropriate as defined by the current *needs*, *lacks* and *wants* of individual students and not a 'stereotype' ideal student (Altman 1980; Allwright 1982; section 3.3 Chapter 3).

The underpinning theoretical constructs informing the programme have made it necessary for the redefinition of teacher-student roles, the relationship between teaching and learning, the nature of teaching materials for reading, and the process of evaluation (Brookes and Grundy 1988:2). The programme takes the teacher as a facilitator, monitoring learning activities by encouraging learners to shoulder the responsibility for their own learning (Carver and Dickinson 1982). This by no means implies depriving students of due teacher guidance and relevant and useful learning experiences (Holec 1980:31). The learners of reading, with appropriate help and guidance on learning how to read, can successfully trace their own preferred learning routes to develop their general knowledge which includes content knowledge (usually academic), knowledge of the reading process and reading strategies, and linguistic knowledge (phonological, morphological, syntactic and textual) (Widdowson 1983; Smith 1982). This exploratory posture helps the learners to wean themselves from undue teacher dependence to undertake more independent work in higher education.

This chapter describes the research design and methodology pursued to realise individualised reading for academic purposes. It has two major sections. The first, section 4.2, deals with the pilot study. This section discusses extensively the selection of subjects, the identification of test materials for both the pretests and post tests, the selection of reading materials and the design of the mode of study. The second section, section 4.3, deals with the main study. It discusses the major improvements made since the pilot study and has the following sub-sections: the selection of students for the study, the identification of the test materials for the pretests and post tests, the selection of reading materials and the design of the mode of study.

4.2 The pilot study

4.21 Identification of students for the study

The quality of the output of an experimental study depends, among other things, on the ability and knowledge of the researcher to appreciate and manipulate a host of intrinsic and extrinsic factors. The intrinsic factors refer to the teaching-learning variables and the extrinsic factors refer to those that affect the process indirectly. The selection and sampling of subjects for such an experiment is again dependent on other variables that may or may not be beyond the control of the experimenter (section 2.44 Chapter 2). Similarly, the selection of students for an experimental study in the Addis Ababa University is dependent on, among other things, the nature of the academic schedule of the students concerned - first year social science students in this particular study - the willingness of the students and teachers identified for the study to participate in research studies, and the availability of research facilities.

4.211 The schedule of Addis Ababa University first year students

First year students in the College of Social Sciences and the other colleges in the main campus of Addis Ababa University, besides other activities, are supposed to take fifteen to eighteen credit-hours in a semester. One credit hour is equivalent to a one-hour class each week. Freshman English has three credit-hours and thus students have three periods of English lessons each week and, under normal circumstances, forty-eight hours in the sixteen weeks of a semester. This excludes the time needed for examinations.

The schedule for first year students is set in such a way that while a group of sections (usually three sections) takes lessons on one specific subject, the other group takes lessons on another subject. There are usually five subjects. For instance, in the first period of a Monday-Wednesday-Friday combination, if students in group one consisting of sections *ss01, ss02,* and *ss03* (about 100 students in a group) are taking Freshman English in three separate rooms, students in group two - *ss04, ss05* and *ss06* - may be taking economics in one big lecture hall. Students in group three - *ss07, ss08* and *ss09* -

may be taking geography, and so on. In the second period of the same, the first group may take geography, the second group Freshman English, and the third group economics. Afternoon classes are usually reserved for physical education, tests and make-up classes. Apparently, such an arrangement does not leave any extra or free time to allow further arrangements for experiments to be undertaken. The hours for Freshman English classes of some of the sections may not be convenient because they may clash with Spoken English class hours. It is to be noted that the students in the study group are planned to do their reading lab classes in the Spoken English laboratory. The experiment cannot be conducted if the lab is reserved for Spoken English, which gets the priority over any other arrangement. Besides, further rearrangements for experimental studies may create administrative inconveniences in such as organising make-up classes or tutorial classes for courses other than Freshman English, and the concerned authorities may not be willing to co-operate or even allow such 'extra-ordinary' arrangements for conducting experiments (section 2.44 Chapter 2; ***ins. 3.226 Appendix 3.2***).

4.212 Teacher-student variable

Another crucial variable in experimental studies in the Addis Ababa University is teacher-student involvement. Certain English language teachers, for one reason or another, may be reluctant to be involved in a study like this. Their reluctance may be explained by one or more of the following reasons: firstly, they might want to avoid actual or anticipated inconvenience, such as having to do more marking, student observation and follow up, and the like; secondly, some teachers may lack the enthusiasm for research in the area for various reasons (section 2.44 Chapter 2), and they seem quite comfortable with a situation in which their "concerns are informed by their own belief systems and often kept private" (Pica 1992:2); and thirdly, some may not be able to foresee whether the study is going to help their students or not and they might feel very much accountable for the success or failure of their students if the teachers are to allow their students to participate and to use a different approach (which is what the current study is recommending), or a different set of teaching materials (section 2.44 and section 2.7 in Chapter 2 above). It would be necessary to make it clear to these teachers (without pretending that one can see it better than they do, but making one's points clearer) that

their students would benefit from being included in the study by indicating to them the apparent weaknesses (which most of them are able to decipher, anyway) of the current service English courses (section 2.6 Chapter 2; ***ins. 3.2415, Appendix 3.2***) and stating the anticipated positive outcomes of the recommended alternative. Admittedly, the promises for improvement in students' reading ability and justifications for the recommendations can only be based on available research output (section 3.2 and section 3.3 Chapter 3). It could be speculated that some may not still be convinced by the fundamental arguments and may not feel committed to undertake the procedures that the study programme entails but they may decide to co-operate with the researcher in order not to discourage the idea. Still some may feel that the research question is dubious and they may also think that the suggested approach is inaccessible. They would prefer not to be involved in the study (see section 4.31 below). Bearing this in mind, the sections selected for study, both during the pilot and the main study, were those that were handled by Freshman English teachers who were willing to participate in the experiment. Apparently, after the selection, the teachers were given an orientation on how to conduct the classes selected for the study based on the proposed approach. This is described in detail in section 4.23 (the pilot) and section 4.33 (the main) below.

Besides the service English teachers whose contribution in the learning and teaching process is acknowledged as pivotal (Widdowson 1990:59; Dickinson 1987; Carver and Dickinson 1982; Geddes and Sturtridge 1982), students also constitute the most important variable in the study. Most students at the first year level are unsure of their academic success. The environment they have just been introduced to will involve them in learning habits and styles that may be different from the ones they were familiar with when they were in secondary schools (***ins. 3.216, Appendix 3.2***). Students are usually confronted with various psychological and pedagogical constraints of adjustment. The academic environment requires of them to take risks and make decisions on *what* and *how to study*, for instance, on taking lecture notes and compiling these notes with supplementary notes from one's reading, on writing assignments and term papers, and on sitting for college examinations (as pointed out by Wilson 1981 regarding the requirements of higher education in the West). All these and others oblige them to plan their work in order to 'survive' in a seemingly hostile academic environment. They may have to learn, for the

first time, to put up with the rigours of academic study that demand independent work, individual initiative and creativity (Abebe 1987). Some students become apprehensive and look for a secured and structured style of learning to give them a sense of security in a wave of uncertainties and possible failure to cope with unclear demands characteristic of higher education. Knowles (quoted in Dickinson 1987:126) contends that learners "enter into a new learning situation feeling a deep need for the security of a clear structural plan - an outline, course syllabus, time schedule and the like. In addition they want to feel that their teachers know what they are doing and are in charge of the learning situation." Riley (1988) contends that there might be an aspect of cultural determinism in preferred learning approaches and feels that the need to be supplied with some structured learning by learners might depend on their cultural background. Bodman (cited in Tumposky 1982:5) states that "with too little control, the students tend to become uneasy and often find it hard to measure their progress - and therefore often feel that they are not learning" (section 5.2..Chapter 5). It cannot be denied that individual learners come "with their own constellation of native language and culture, proficiency level, learning style, motivation, and attitudes toward language learning" (Pica 1992:3; section 2.7 Chapter 2). However, it is argued that effective learning takes place only when learners take most of management of their learning by themselves (Allwright and Bailey 1991).

Despite this, because of their earlier learning experiences in schools, students may not be willing to participate in a research like this that demands more independent work and more time than they would have to expend on the conventional Freshman English. They might not even see why they have to be selected, given different materials, and asked to do more work than others. These are some of the constraining factors that have been appraised when the research experiment was designed and when the subjects for the study were selected. The mode of study was designed for the experimental groups described in section 4.23 and section 4.33, for the pilot study and the corpus study respectively, along the lines that would enhance individual work and participation (section 1.11 and section 1.12 Chapter 1).

4.213 Availability of research facilities

Research facilities identified for the study included the teaching materials to be used, classrooms (including rooms for consultation and individual attention, optional), language laboratories with equipment in good working condition, halls to hold meetings and tests, and stationery for tests and follow-up.

The teaching materials selected for use in the study, provided by the British Council in London, arrived in Addis Ababa piece by piece and they were too incomplete to be used even by the end of the first semester of the 1989-90 academic year. The pilot study had to be launched with only those that arrived. It is to be noted that these materials had no guide books, work books, or even placement tests. Thus, instead of the placement tests, the students' test results (mentioned in section 4.22 below) were used as rough guidelines to help students select appropriate reading from the ***ELSIP*** collection during the pilot study. This was brought to the attention of the instructors involved as well. The ***ELSIP*** collection was only complete in the middle of the first semester of the 1990-91 academic year when many copies of the student work book arrived.

Reserving classrooms for regular student consultation and follow-up was also another problem. Thus, the instructors of the study groups had to use the Freshman English classrooms during the students' Freshman English class hours only. Moreover, tests had to be conducted in these classrooms during the mentioned class hours. It was difficult to arrange classrooms for tests lasting more than an hour, and for all students to take a test at the same time. However, the main study was more organised and successful than the pilot in these respects.

The Spoken English laboratory was selected as an ideal place for individualised reading sessions. However, because of clashes in timing between the Spoken English and the Freshman English courses, the reading sessions sometimes had to be conducted in ordinary classrooms that did not invite independent work. These classrooms were only suited for group work and discussion. One more serious problem with the Spoken English laboratory was that most of the tape recorders were out of order and those that

were functioning could not play the recorded materials accompanying the ***ELSIP*** materials (section 4.2224, for the discussion of these materials). Hence, the ***ELSIP*** materials were used without their accompanying recorded materials with the pilot study group.

Moreover, because of lack of paper, which was another factor that hindered the progress of the study during the initial stages, most of the learning activities designed specially for the pilot group, to make up for the missing work books, had to be cancelled. This problem was not apparent the following year with the main study groups since each student had been provided with a work book to record necessary information.

The pilot study was conducted in the second semester of the 1989-90 academic year. The selection of students for the study, by bearing in mind the factors discussed in section 4.211 and section 4.212 above, was made as follows:

4.2131 Out of the twenty one sections of first year social science students, ten

age groups	**15 to 17**		**18 and 19**		**20 and above**	
	number	per cent	number	per cent	number	per cent
	81	23	221	64	42	12
family background	**rich**		**middle**		**poor**	
	number	per cent	number	per cent	number	per cent
	14	4	150	43	177	51
sex	**male**			**female**		
	number	percent		number		percent
	287	83		57		16
place	**urban**			**rural**		
	number	percent		number		percent
	207	60		134		39

Table 4.1 Pre-pilot sampled population description[1]

[1]Table excludes the number of those students who have not responded to the specific questions.

sections were selected to fill-in a questionnaire (described in section 4.221 below). The respective instructors co-operated in distributing and collecting the questionnaires. Some instructors helped their students by explaining the instructions and some of the items in the questionnaire the students found difficult to understand. This questionnaire was meant to find out general information about the students, and about their reading behaviour (Gebremedhin 1991). Table 4.1 summarises the information compiled from the questionnaire.

4.2132 Three hundred forty-four students have responded to the questionnaire. The responses confirm the fact that Addis Ababa University, as the prominent centre of higher learning in the country, has serious disparities in representation regarding sex, urban and rural centres, and rich and poor families. According to Table 4.1 above, 83 per cent are male and only 16 per cent are female, probably indicating that few females could get access to higher education in the country. Similarly, most students are young, between 18 and 19 years old (64 per cent), and 87 per cent of the students are below 20 years old. This may indicate that most of the learners are young with little or no work experience. They may have joined the university a year after they have completed their high school lessons. It might be assumed that their learning experience is limited as indicated in section 2.3 and section 2.7 Chapter 2. The above table also indicates that most students have come from urban centres (60 per cent) confirming the fact that the majority of the Ethiopian population, found in the rural areas, are not getting access to the higher educational establishment. It has been indicated in section 2.2 and section 2.44 Chapter 2 that the majority of the students getting access to the university come from very few selected urban centres. Moreover, the students have reported that a slim majority of them (51 per cent) come from poor families although it is claimed that probably about 90 per cent of the population is poor (McNab 1989; section 2.1 Chapter 2). This information has to be taken as tentative since students have not been given the definitions of the terms *rich*, *middle* and *poor* in Ethiopian standards. However, the responses have some relevance to the concern of the study, since it is believed that attitudes to oneself have some bearing on language learning.

4.2133 By taking into consideration the above information, the number of sections that can be involved have been limited to six. It is planned that these sections would create three pairs of study and control. The selection has been made by taking the following into consideration:

4.21331 The Freshman English schedule should not clash with the Spoken English schedule since the Spoken English lab is to be used for the individualised reading sessions for the study groups.

4.21332 The instructors concerned should be willing to be involved in the study and to follow the procedures outlined for the mode of study outlined in section 4.23 below. They should also be willing to expend more extra time than is required for Freshman English.

Accordingly, six sections consisting of 147 students are assigned to three instructors (each instructor has two sections - one study and one control). The description of this target population, as given in Table 4.2 below, reflects the description shown in Table 4.1 of

age groups	**15 to 17 years old**		**18 and 19 years old**		**20 years and above**	
	number	per cent	number	per cent	number	per cent
	30	20	96	65	21	15
family background	**rich**		**middle**		**poor**	
	number	**per cent**	number	per cent	number	per cent
	4	2.7	66	44.9	77	52
sex	**male**			**female**		
	number	**per cent**		**number**	**per cent**	
	122	83		25	17	
location *of schools stds. come from*	**urban**			**rural**		
	number	per cent		number	per cent	
	88	60		59	40	

Table 4.2 Description of the sample population for the pilot study

the larger population. Thus, the sample population for the pilot could be taken as a good representation of the larger pre-pilot sample population regarding age, family background, sex and place where students come from. This could also give a chance for generalising the linguistic performances of the pilot group to the pre-pilot sampled population with some degrees of probability.

As indicated above, the six sections are paired, one instructor assigned for a pair which constitutes of a study group and a control group. The pairing is based on the fact that the instructors selected have already had two sections of Freshman English and were willing to participate in the study; and one of the two sections taught by the same instructor whose Freshman English schedule does not clash with the schedule of the Spoken English course is taken as a study group. The other section is taken as a control group. The following are the pairs in the order of study and control respectively: *ss05* and *ss11*, *ss13* and *ss03*, *ss18* and *ss09* with 27 and 21, 27 and 24, and 28 and 20 students respectively. The students have taken the pretest package mentioned in section 4.22. These students have already taken Freshman English 101A in the first semester.

4.22 Tests and teaching materials for the pilot study

Students in the ten first year sections have filled in a questionnaire, and out of these ten sections, six sections have taken a pretest package consisting of reading comprehension, readability of first year course books, and general and required English language ability.

4.221 The questionnaire

The questionnaire adapted from Carrell (1989:121-134) is intended to find out, besides the information indicated in Table 4.1 and Table 4.2, what the students know about the reading process, what they do to effectively read and they feel they need to improve their reading abilities in order to succeed in their academic studies (*Appendix 2.1*). The main part of the questionnaire consists of the following categories:

> ***4.2211*** The first consists of a list of effective reading strategies and students are asked to indicate whether they are confident in their ability to use these strategies

Confidence in one's ability to employ appropriate reading strategies	a. predicting while reading b. identifying between main points & supporting details c. relating information to previous part of text d. evaluating author's opinion e. using background knowledge f. feel whether what's read is understood
Repair Strategies	a. proceeding with reading and hope for clarification later b. reading the problematic part again c. rereading d. looking up for meaning of words e. stopping reading if text is difficult[2] f. looking for help from teachers
Effective reading strategies	a. mentally sounding out parts of words b. understanding the meaning of each word c. getting the overall meaning of text d. pronouncing each whole word e. focusing on grammatical structures f. relating text to prior knowledge g. looking up words in the dictionary h. focusing on the organisation of text
Sources of reading difficulty	a. the sounds of individual words b. pronunciation of words c. recognizing words d. grammatical structures e. the alphabet f. relating text to prior knowledge g. getting the overall meaning of text h. organisation of text i. summarising j. skimming and scanning k. transcoding information
Characteristics of the best reader	a. recognize words b. sound out words c. understand the overall meaning of text d. use a dictionary e. guess at word meaning f. integrate information in the text with prior knowledge g. focus on the details of content h. grasp the organisation of the text
Preferred ways of learning to become an effective reader	a. teachers should mark assignments to help learners correct their mistakes b. learners should be taught effective strategies of reading c. learners should be encouraged to learn through discovery d. learners should be allowed to take the responsibility for their learning

Table 4.3 Contents of the Questionnaire

in their reading in English for academic purposes. The list consists of six reading strategies that researchers claim that successful readers employ in their reading (Nuttal 1982:146; Hosenfeld 1977).

[2]This is an *avoidance strategy* rather than a *repair strategy* as indicated in Carrell (1989a).

4.2212 The second consists of six items on reading repair strategies. Subjects are required to identify the strategies they frequently use when they face any reading problem.

4.2213 The third set consists of eight items on effective reading strategies. Subjects are asked to indicate their levels of agreement or disagreement with a given statement about effective reading strategies. The items include both bottom up and top down features (section 3.211 and section 3.212 Chapter 3) reading strategies.

4.2214 The fourth group is a list of possible sources of reading difficulty. Like the above, the list includes both bottom up and top down features, either data driven or concept driven elements. This category has eleven items.

4.2215 The next group consists of seven reading strategies associated with successful or unsuccessful readers. Each student is supposed to react to these statements from his/her own experience. The aim is to find out the common reading conceptions of the first year social science students in Addis Ababa. This could give a guide to the instructor as to what to focus on during learner training sessions (section 1.23 Chapter 1).

4.2216 The last section in the questionnaire has four items that require of the students to indicate their preferred method of learning to become effective readers in English for academic purposes. The items include both teacher-dependent and non-teacher-dependent learners' characteristics (Table 4.3 below).

The questionnaire consists of six categories (as mentioned above) and each category contains both effective and ineffective reading strategies (section 3.21 and section 3.22 Chapter 3). The rationale for the questionnaires based on the research findings that students' knowledge of the reading process and their knowledge of the effective reading strategies (metacognitive knowledge) precedes their ability to manipulate effective reading strategies (Nisbet and Shucksmith 1986:9; Carrell 1989; Brown 1980:459f; Hosenfeld

1984:233; section 3.221 Chapter 3). The findings from this questionnaire would indicate student's knowledge about the reading process, their awareness of how they read, and may partially explain the cause of the low level of students' reading ability in English for academic purposes. The questionnaire is based on a Likert scale ranging from 1 as *strong agreement* to 5 as *strong disagreement* to a given statement. A student is required to indicate his choice by writing the number that corresponds to his reaction to the given statement. The statement could be either desirable or undesirable (as a characteristic of either a good reader or a weak reader). As it has been indicated above, the aggregate of the responses may indicate students' ways of looking at the reading process and the common reading strategies they employ for reading in English for academic purposes. The finding would have some implications for learner training schemes that constitute the major part of the mode of study recommended for the study groups.[3]

4.222 Reading comprehension and readability tests

4.2221 Reading comprehension tests

The reading comprehension tests are taken from the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate *First Certificate in English* paper (***Appendix 4***). It is assumed that this paper is an already established examination paper for general English and students are supposed to be familiar with the contents of the reading passages. The format of the questions (which is exclusively multiple choice) is similar in style to most of the Freshman English reading comprehension tests and the questions in most other academic courses students take in their first year programme. The questions call for both low and high level skills of reading (***Appendix 4***). In other words, each test consists of three short passages with five multiple choice questions that focus on students' ability to

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[3]At the initial stages of the planning of the experiment, as indicated, the metacognitive questionnaire was designed to find out students' conceptions of the reading process, their preferred reading strategies and their recommendations for improving reading instruction. Though the objectives remained basically the same and an attempt was made to relate students' knowledge of the reading process and reading strategies to their performance in reading comprehension tests and the results were inconclusive (Gebremedhin 1991), the idea of pretesting and post testing, to see whether students' conceptions about the reading process had significantly changed at the end of the study was abandoned during the pilot study. Instead, the students' report on their progress in reading, submitted in the form indicated in Table 4.5, is used to assess the progress in their reading in English (section 5.21 Chapter 5).

recall, predict, evaluate, and identify main points from supporting details. Each test takes forty five minutes. The reading comprehension pretest and post test results are analyzed in section 5.221 Chapter 5 below.

4.2222 Readability tests

The major purpose of the readability tests (***Appendix 5***) is to find out the degree or level of difficulty students have in reading their first year course books. It has been pointed out in section 3.2221 Chapter 3 above that establishing a readability level of a text is quite subjective and prone to leave many questions unanswered rather than provide a convincing solution. There is no readability formula available to date that can effectively test whether a given text is difficult or not for a target population. Most readability formula are based on the common assumption that a text is likely to be difficult to read if it has many long sentences with a number of more than three-syllable words (section 3.2221 Chapter 3; Klare 1969; Gilliland 1972; Alderson and Urquhart 1984). Besides this, each readability formula has its own discrepancies (Harrison 1980).

It is indicated in section 3.2221 Chapter 3 that some researchers claim that the cloze procedure is effective in bringing together both reader and text characteristics (Bachman 1982; Jonz 1987). They claim that the procedure is sensitive and reliable to comprehension processes at various levels - low and high level skills in reading. As mentioned in section 3.2221 Chapter 3, other researchers argue the cloze procedure is only effective in measuring only the lower order reading core proficiency skills. They claim that the research findings confirm that the cloze procedure is erratic, unreliable and insensitive to textual aspects across sentences (Alderson 1979:219; 1980; Klein-Braley 1983; Markam 1985). Despite these conflicting views, the cloze procedure is used in this study because (a) it is assumed that it is better than most readability formula (Jonz 1990) and (b) some researchers claim that it is simple to set and mark (Cripwell 1976; Harrison 1980; Elley 1984).

Accordingly, three texts of 250 to 300 words length have been selected from the first, the middle and the last sections of each freshman course book: geography, history,

philosophy and political economy. Every seventh word is deleted and there are 25 deletions in each text. Actual deleted words are sought as correct responses in order to avoid any subjectivity in the marking[4]. By using Cripwell's (1976) cut-off points[5], the raw scores are interpreted as follows: a score of 37 per cent and below indicates that the text is very difficult, and thus its readability level is identified as *frustrational*; a score between 38 per cent to 50 per cent indicates that the text could be understood with some help from the teacher, and its readability level is labelled as *instructional*; and, a score of 51 per cent and above indicates that the text is easy enough to be handled by the student independently, and its readability level is indexed as *independent* level. When this is computed out of 25, 9 and below, 10 to 12, and 13 and above out of 25 can be taken to indicate the *frustrational*, *instructional* and *independent* levels of readability respectively for a particular course book.

4.2223 Tests of English language ability

The test papers of the first two service English courses (Freshman English 101A and Freshman English 101B) have been selected to evaluate students' linguistic ability in light of the official linguistic requirements (***Appendix 6***). These test papers are selected because they are conventionally taken as reflecting the official English language requirements of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature. Whether these tests succeed in assessing the students' linguistic ability to cope with the academic requirements or not, or whether they meet the general criteria of test validity and reliability, or the like, has been considered beyond the scope of this study. However, recent studies tentatively hold that there are some limitations in these tests (Teshome

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[4]However, it should be noted that those who claim that the cloze procedure is effective for measuring readability levels, do not agree on two basic issues: the basis of the deletion and the marking of the responses. While Bachman (1982, 1985) asserts rational deletion (deleting selected syntactic elements) as the most effective in assessing readability, Harrison (1980) recommends random deletion (whereby every n^{th} word, usually the fifth or the seventh, is deleted). Moreover, Harrison (1980) and Cripwell (1976) recommend original deleted words as correct or acceptable responses to avoid subjectivity.

[5]As indicated in section 3.2221 Chapter 3, Elley (1984) studied the correspondence between the cut-off points of scores of native and non-native speakers on a cloze test in order to justify the use of the cloze procedure for establishing readability levels. He claimed that there was a high relationship between the two cut-off points.

1992), such as the assumption that a great majority of the students can perform satisfactorily well as soon as they join the university after completing high school in, for instance, Freshman English 101A, before they take the course Freshman English 101A for a semester (section 5.323; Figure 5.9 Chapter 5). It is understood that both tests follow the same pattern: reading comprehension section, vocabulary section, structure and usage section, and composition section. All sections in each test do not receive the same weight. In general, more marks are allotted to the reading comprehension, and the structure and usage sections.

4.2224 Teaching materials for the pilot study

As stated above (section 1.2, section 1.5 Chapter 1; section 3.2221 Chapter 3) the selection of teaching materials is dependent on the theoretical assumptions that inform individualised reading. These materials should encourage learners' creativity and facilitate learning through discovery. They should allow the use of preferred learning styles and strategies while at the same time provide ample rich learning experience and maintain learners' motivation (Frankel 1982; Dickinson 1987; 1988; Bloor 1985). They should also be relevant to learners' purposes - in this case, they should enhance reading in English for academic purposes.

The ***English Language Self-Instruction Package*** or ***ELSIP*** (section 3.2221 Chapter 3) is selected for the pilot study group (section 4.213). The package consists of graded readers with tapes published by various *ELT*[6] publishers. It consists of 'talking books'

Initial placement test	**Level 1** 600 voc. 30 bks	**Level 2** 600-1200 30 bks	**Level 3** 1200-2000 30 bks +	**Level 4** 2000-2500 20 bks 20 readrs	**Level 5** 2500+ 10 taped novels
Progress Test	progress test 1-5	progress test 6-10	progress test 11-15	progress test 16-20	

Table 4.4 Components of the ELSIP (source: ***ELSIP*** Student Guide)

[6]ELT means English language teaching

(books with tapes), readers and taped novels in five levels of difficulty as indicated in Table 4.4 above.

The ***ELSIP*** Student Guide outlines the preliminary tasks of a student wishing to use the package. It advises students to *want to learn* English, develop the *purpose for learning* the language, determine their current linguistic ability, assess their rate of progress in their learning, programme their study, decide *what* and *how much* to study, and determine the time they could spend in studying. After taking the initial placement test (which is exclusively developed using the cloze procedure), students are supposed to choose the titles and descriptions given in the guide, select the one title they like best, read the book and listen to the tape at the same time, read the book without the tape (jotting down some vocabulary items), read the book and listen to the tape again, listen to the tape without the book, do the exercise or puzzle at the end of the book, and be ready to answer questions such as whether they liked the book they read, how much time they spent on reading the book and whether they followed the steps. Ultimately, students are advised to complete their entry on their progress chart (***ELSIP*** *Student Guide*).

These readers are believed to provide learners with the freedom to learn on their own on the one hand, and an adequate learning material which is both interesting and motivating, on the other (Elley 1986:222-5 for the results of book floods in the Fiji islands). However, due to the problem mentioned above (section 4.213), the materials have to be used without the tapes and some of the steps recommended in the ***ELSIP*** Student Guide have to be adapted to the prevailing situation.

4.23 Mode of the study of the pilot group

Before the classes started, the teachers involved have been given an orientation on how to manage the 'special' classes. The orientation has focused on teacher-student role, facilitating student independent work, methods of follow up of students in the individualised reading classes, maintaining and enhancing student motivation and confidence, and conducting the group work and discussion classes (section 1.11, section 1.12, Chapter 1; section 3.3 Chapter 3; Dickinson 1987; Ellis and Sinclair 1989;

Allwright 1984; 1988). It is also planned that both the teachers involved in the study and the researcher would share their experiences of the study and their subsequent impressions about and reactions to the experiment[7].

With the three sections of the control group, on the one hand, it is indicated to the teachers that they should use the conventional approach of developing reading (as stipulated in the Freshman English 101B course book). They should use the Freshman English 101B course book and teach their students how to read the passages and ask them to answer the specified reading comprehension questions. They should also give their students explanations of the items of usage mentioned in the above textbook and ask their students to do the exercises as suggested in section 2.3 and section 2.5 Chapter 2 (Madsen 1976; Tesfaye and Taylor 1976; Conroy 1985). The students have three periods of such lessons per week.

On the other hand, as clearly specified in the orientation given to the teachers, their three study sections are to follow the schedule and mode of learning outlined below.

4.231 Two periods per week of individualised reading

With the help of the instructor, a student identifies an appropriate reading level from the ***ELSIP*** and takes the book that has the appropriate level of difficulty. Instead of the placement test that should accompany the ***ELSIP***, the instructor is advised to classify his students' abilities based on their achievement in the reading comprehension and Freshman English pre-tests. It is understood that these tests are not placement tests and may not be appropriate to employ them to identify the reading level of each student. However, because the placement tests for the materials are not available, instructors have to use the test results to help them decide which level in the package (Table 4.4 above) suits each student. As

[7]Though the sharing of experience between the teachers and the researcher continued throughout the semester, as it is indicated in section 5.21 Chapter 5, it is only possible to reproduce here the reports of the students. It is indicated in section 5.2 Chapter 5 that two sections (a pair of study and control) have been excluded from the analysis since the concerned instructor was not willing to administer the post test package to his students.

students progress in their reading, or if some of them find the booklets they are using inappropriate to their level of reading, they can look for suitable ones from the collection. It is not surprising to learn, however, that most of the students found Level 1 and Level 2 readers in the ***ELSIP*** collection very easy. The majority of the students in the pilot study used Level 2 and Level 3 readers.

On the average, most students are expected to read one book in one period. Each student is supposed to write a short note describing what he/she has read and this is to be colle ted by the concerned instructor for follow-up. Each student works on his/her own, and the teacher monitors the task, helps those who need help, and checks and records all student activities. For instance, for each student he/she will have in his/her file the readability level of the book, the speed of reading, what the student does while reading (for instance, the student notes some points, selects and writes new vocabulary items, summarises the story, and the like), the student's progress in his reading, the major difficulties the student has encountered while reading, and the motivation and level of confidence of the student to tackle the reading task on his/her own.

Name .....*I.D. number*..... *Section* .....
Date ..... *Title of reading booklet* .....
Author/s ..... *pages* ..... *vocabulary number* .....

Summary .....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Comment (please include here your evaluation of your progress in reading, whether you liked the material, how fast you read, how much you can remember, what you focus on when you are reading - such as vocabulary, grammar, text organisation, etc.)
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Table 4.5 An Outline for Recording Reading Progress

The report is planned to provide the reading instructor with ample chance for follow-up, without tampering with the student's independent learning (Rogers 1983:18; Riley 1982:61; Clark 1987:103). It could also help him/her to provide his/her expertise to those students who need the guidance during the appropriate time. The report will be collected for analysis to establish the effects of the approach on the students' progress in reading in English for academic purposes (section 5.21 Chapter 5).

4.232 One period per week of group discussion

The one period per week of group discussion is fundamentally organised to achieve two things: (a) to encourage students to share their experiences of reading and to discuss what they have read, and (b) to work together the exercises on structure drawn from their Freshman English 101B course book. It is assumed that students will develop the confidence that they are learning and that they are not lagging behind other students in the control groups (Tumposky 1982). It would also facilitate learner training activities - either for group or individual students.

In other words, students are told to form groups of five or six. Student preference is taken as a major criterion for grouping. In groups, students exchange information about their reading in the reading lab, retell the stories they have read in their own words in English, comment on each other's progress in reading and learning to read, and plan together to finish doing the structure parts of the course book - Freshman English 101B. The instructor attends to one group at a time, joining in their discussion and planning of their work. He/she also takes special attention of those students who may become apprehensive of the system because of lack of confidence in their ability to operate in the new learning situation. He/she provides, sometimes, the answers to some of the structure exercises in the textbook in printed form and demonstrates through this that it is not the mere getting of an answer to a specific question that is relevant but the engagement in the plethora of language learning activities, both individual and

group. Before students discuss a unit in the structure section, each student member of the group should do his/her share of work at home assigned to him/her by the group and come to class to contribute his/her share to the discussion. Thus the one period class discussion session engenders a situation where students could develop their communicative competence (Allwright 1984; Widdowson 1990).

The pilot study lasted from January to May 1990. At the end of the programme all students, both in the control and study groups, were given a post test consisting of reading comprehension, readability and general English language tests. Students were also asked to submit a summary of their reports on their reading experiences. The results of the tests and the summary of reports of the pilot study are submitted in section 5.22 and section 5.23 Chapter 5 below. The major observations from the pilot study used to improve the main study are mentioned in section 4.31 below.

4.3 The main study

4.31 Implications of the pilot study

It is mentioned that the pilot study undertaken in the second semester of the 1989-90 academic year has indicated that the approach is feasible (section 5.2 Chapter 5). However, some important lessons have been drawn from the pilot study that helped to redesign the main study (undertaken in the first semester of 1990-91 academic year) so that both teachers and students could find the approach easy to implement. As mentioned above, the corpus study was originally planned to last one whole academic year with a new group of students and teachers. However, as it is indicated (section 1.33 Chapter 1; section 2.44 Chapter 2; section 5.3 Chapter 3), the main study has been limited to one semester. It is to be noted that initially, a pre-test, a mid-test and a post test comprising reading comprehension test, readability test and general English language ability test were prepared. Three types of questionnaires with almost the same style and content for students and one questionnaire for teacher reactions towards the individualised reading programme were also planned. However, due to the unexpected closure of the Addis Ababa University in the beginning of the second semester of 1990-91 academic year, the

test package and questionnaire had to be limited to two sets only - one for the pretest and another for the post-test.

It is pointed out that the main study has been modified by using the experiences gained from the pilot study. From the pilot study, the following have come out prominently:

4.311 The administrative authorities concerned with the academic programming of the College of Social Science first year programme have not been convinced of the effectiveness of the approach pursued. It is alleged that students are not given enough time for learning grammar; and the approach has encouraged laziness on the part of instructors. Another allegation is that the materials used are not appropriate and not informed by the officially approved syllabus of the service English courses, and, as a result, students are poorly prepared for the Freshman English examination (section 2.44 Chapter 2). The fear is quite understandable given the conditions in the country in general and the university in particular (Teshome 1990; Girma 1992; section 2.44 Chapter 2). It is evident from this that the office could block the conducting of the corpus study. Hence, some ways that do not contradict the main thesis of the approach should be sought to prove to the concerned that the students are appropriately *being prepared* for the service English final examination.

4.312 The pilot study has made it evident that some instructors, for one reason or another, have not been following the essential procedures of the approach as outlined in section 4.23 above. As a result of this, and in light of the failure of one teacher to administer the post test package, a pair of study and control group has to be excluded. As indicated below, if the main study is to succeed, the instructors to be selected should be willing to follow the procedures the approach entails and to conduct both the pretest and post test packages for their groups.

4.313 A number of students, specially those who have been excluded from taking the post test in 1989-90 academic year, report that they have not been taught what the Freshman English 101B specified. It is understandable that they have taken the

course book as an end in itself because it is thought that it determines the format and content of the Freshman English examination. The approach recommended demonstrates that there are other possible ways, more effective and motivating, of learning language (and subsequently, meeting the demands of the service English courses and the learners themselves) that could help students to succeed in examinations - not only in Freshman English but also in other academic courses. This has not helped to convince some of them that they can succeed (Geddes 1982). However, as it revealed itself later, the students have not been complaining about the approach but about the way the particular Freshman English class was handled by their instructor. Apparently, the way the instructor employed could not engender confidence in the students. In general, the following could be said about these complaints:

4.3131 In the concerned class, it might not have been possible, for various reasons,to create a situation that could generate student confidence in what was being done. In fact, it was alleged that there was not enough time for lectures on grammar. The programme as such was not designed to suit to lectures on the description of the English language for first year students.

4.3132 The students were not getting appropriate *follow-up* and their English classes represented the abuse of the individualised reading programme. All students were treated as if they did not need any help from their teacher regarding all their activities, including their attempts to learn the structural items outlined in their course books. Of course, there was no follow up of their progress in their reading.

4.3133 As indicated above, during the pilot study the ***ELSIP*** did not contain enough reading comprehension exercises, and students who had already had one semester learning Freshman English and had already adjusted themselves to the lecture method, did not want to switch to another method that required more work with less certainty about success in Freshman English examination. This had a strong bearing on the fact

that the transition from a teacher-dominated classroom situation should have been managed more carefully, and the ***ELSIP***, in the way it was used, without the tapes and the student workbooks, was not effective, at least in this particular class, for generating individualised reading and independent work (Tumposky 1982; Geddes and Sturtridge 1982; Dickinson 1987).

Despite these problems and the constraints of time, it can be claimed that the pilot study has proved to be successful. The students' reports indicate that they have found the approach useful and the reading materials interesting (***Appendix 3***). Their reports are summarised in section 5.21 Chapter 5. The experience from the pilot study has been used to introduce some modifications in the original plan of the main study in order to make it more comprehensive, organised, and, for students and teachers alike, confidence-generating and interesting.

4.32 Selection of subjects for the main study

The pilot study has indicated, beyond any doubt, that the student-teacher variable is the most important one. It is imperative to see to it that both teachers and students identified for the programme have the willingness and readiness to try new approaches to teaching and learning language for specific purposes, and to accept with modesty the fact if the selected approach ends in some sort of an unpredicted frustration. Hence, the research could only be conducted by those teachers who are open-minded to try new ideas, and who are willing to participate in the programme (***Appendix 3.2***).

Before the selections of subjects for the corpus study, the objectives of the programme has been introduced to a number of the 1990-91 academic year Freshman English course instructors. Eight instructors have been identified, after a series of discussions, who are willing to participate if given the permission to do so by the *Department of Foreign Languages and Literature.*

Subsequently, the instructors have been given an orientation, as specified in section 4.34 below, and the system demonstrated in their respective classes as soon as they have taken

up their assignments. It has been agreed that the researcher would help instructors with the follow up and the conducting of the reading and discussion sessions. It is also planned to hold frequent meetings to discuss issues arising in the progress of the study. As a result of this arrangement, the researcher is able to get access to the thirteen sections of first year social science students. These sections are *ss03*, *ss04*, *ss06*, *ss08*, *ss09*, *ss11*, *ss12*, *ss13*, *ss16*, *ss17*, *ss18*, *ss19* and *ss21*. The total number of students involved in these sections is 420. This is more than 60 per cent of the annual intake of the College of Social Science Freshman Programme in the 1990-91 academic year.

Table 4.6 below indicates that 79 per cent of the students are 18 and above years old. 82 per cent are male and only 15 per cent are female. The inequity in the representation of the sexes in Addis Ababa University, as pointed out in section 2.4 in Chapter 2 and section 4.21 above, is also corroborated by the present figures taken from the main study groups. Similarly about 54 per cent of the selected population report that they come from families with a low socio-economic standard as one would imagine this figure to be more than this in light of the fact that the majority of the Ethiopian population is poor as reflected in the GNP (McNab 1989; Eshetu 1991).

Another interesting phenomenon is to what degree the rural population of the country, which is more than 80 per cent of the total population, is represented in this target population. Only 25 per cent reported that they come from rural schools, and the majority, 72 per cent, say that they are from urban centres. 71 per cent claim that Amharic is their mother tongue; and, 10 per cent and 7 per cent indicate that their mother tongue is Oromigna and Tigrigna respectively. 8 per cent of the students reported other Ethiopian languages. It might be interesting to compare this with a similar study made on first year students' mother tongue in the fall of 1968. The study indicated that 55.5 per cent were Amharic mother tongue, 23.5 per cent were Tigrigna mother tongue, 10.4 per cent were Oromigna mother tongue, 7.8 per cent other Ethiopian languages (Cooper and King 1976). Apparently, even after more than twenty years, the disparity is clear. It can be claimed that access to the university is limited, and the relevance of the educational programmes it offers to the day to day activities of the majority of the Ethiopian population remains questionable (see section 2.4 Chapter 2).

section number / per cent	Age				Sex			SES				Place			Mother tongue					
	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	0	1	2	3	4	5
ss03	1	6	22	6	1	25	9	1	1	21	12	1	20	14	1	29	1	3	1	0
n[8]=35	3	17	63	17	3	71	26	3	3	60	34	3	57	40	3	83	3	9	3	0
ss04	0	4	20	6	0	28	2	0	0	10	20	0	19	11	0	24	1	2	3	0
n=30	0	13	67	20	0	93	7	0	0	33	67	0	63	37	0	80	3	7	10	0
ss06	1	8	18	8	1	27	7	1	0	16	18	1	25	9	1	28	3	2	1	0
n=35	3	23	51	23	3	77	20	3	0	46	51	3	71	26	3	80	9	6	3	0
ss08	1	6	16	7	0	22	8	0	0	19	11	0	26	4	0	20	1	3	4	2
n=30	3	20	53	23	0	73	27	0	0	63	37	0	87	13	0	67	3	10	13	7
ss09	0	8	15	7	0	28	2	0	1	6	23	0	20	10	0	17	8	2	3	0
n=30	0	27	50	23	0	93	7	0	3	20	77	0	67	33	0	57	27	7	10	0
ss11	0	5	20	6	0	26	5	0	1	11	19	0	20	11	0	21	4	0	5	1
n=31	0	16	65	19	0	84	16	0	3	35	61	0	65	35	0	68	13	0	16	3
ss12	3	7	18	5	3	24	6	3	0	11	19	3	24	6	3	22	5	3	0	
n=33	9	21	55	15	9	73	18	9	0	33	58	9	73	18	9	67	15	9	0	

[8]*n* stands for number of students in the specified section. *ss* stands for social science first year section

ss13	5	2	21	9	5	26	6	5	0	12	20	5	25	7	5	24	2	3	0			
n=37	14	5	57	24	14	70	16	14	0	32	54	14	68	19	14	65	5	8	8	0		
ss16	2	6	19	11	2	31	5	2	1	20	15	2	29	7	2	30	4	1	1	0		
n=38	5	16	50	29	5	82	13	5	3	53	40	5	76	18	5	79	11	3	3	0		
ss17	0	5	18	10	0	32	1	0	0	7	26	0	23	10	0	25	5	1	2	0		
n=33	0	15	55	30	0	97	3	0	0	21	79	0	70	30	0	76	15	3	6	0		
ss18	0	2	14	7	0	23	0	0	0	15	8	0	20	3	0	11	5	6	1	0		
n=28	0	9	61	30	0	100	0	0	0	65	35	0	87	13	0	48	22	26	4	0		
ss19	0	10	14	9	0	26	7	0	0	15	18	0	26	7	0	25	1	1	6	0		
n=33	0	30	42	27	0	79	21	0	0	46	55	0	79	21	0	76	3	3	8	0		
ss21	0	7	15	10	0	27	5	0	1	14	17	0	26	6	0	23	3	4	2	0		
n=32	0	22	47	31	0	84	16	0	3	44	53	0	81	19	0	72	9	13	6	0		
All sec	13	76	230	101	12	345	63	12	5	177	226	12	303	105	12	299	43	31	32	3		
n=420	3	18	55	24	3	82	15	3	1	42	54	3	72	25	3	71	10	7	8	1		

Table 4.6 Description of students selected for the main study

key: 0 = no response for all attributes; **Age**: 1 = 17 years and below, 2 = 18 and 19 years old, 3 = 20 years and above; **Sex**: 1 = male, 2 = female; **SES** (family's socio-economic background: 1 = rich, 2 = middle, 3 = poor; **Place** (location of school): 1 = urban, 2 = rural; **Mother tongue**: 1 = Amharic, 2 = Oromigna, 3 = Tigrigna, 4 = other Ethiopian languages, 5 = non-Ethiopian languages.

After the sections are identified, a questionnaire (section 4.331 below) is administered to find out the demographic information and the students' knowledge of the reading process and reading strategies. A part of the information is given in Table 4.6 above. After the questionnaire, the selected population is categorised into study and control groups. The classification is based on the rationale discussed in detail in section 4.21 and section 4.31 above. Accordingly, six sections, namely *sso3, ss06, ss12, ss13, ss16,* and *ss19* are categorised as study, and *ss04, ss08, ss09, ss11, ss17, ss18,* and *ss21* as control. The demographic information compiled for the two groups indicates that there is no major difference in the subjects' attributes as indicated in Table 4.7 below. Table 4.7 below indicates that the comparison between the study and control groups using the attributes of age, sex, socio-economic standard (SES), place and mother tongue confirms that the two groups belong to the same population.

After the questionnaire, the students take the pretest package described in section 4.33 below, in two categories: readability test with Freshman English 101A test, and reading comprehension test with Freshman English 101B in two different days (***Appendix 5*** and ***Appendix 6***). Both the questionnaire and the tests are given before the students start classes. As mentioned above, the control group follow the conventional approach to learning to read in English for academic purposes, while the study group are introduced to the suggested approach. Before the study groups start classes instructors give an explanation of the basic objectives of the new approach and the procedures that should be used to realise these objectives.

Accordingly, the most important points included in the orientation are mentioned in section 4.342. The salient points mentioned include the contents of the programme, the methods of keeping a regular progress record in the student workbook, the selecting of appropriate reading cards, the system of developing a continuous assessment of one's reading performance (and subsequently, the techniques of utilising results of reading comprehension, vocabulary and reading speed exercises for improving one's reading

section number/ per cent	Age				Sex			SES				Place			Mother tongue					
	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	0	1	2	3	4	5
ssSTUDY	12	39	112	48	12	159	40	12	1	95	102	12	149	50	12	158	16	13	12	0
n=211	6	18	53	23	6	75	19	6	1	45	48	6	71	24	6	75	8	6	6	0
ssCONTROL	1	37	118	53	0	186	23	0	3	82	124	0	154	55	0	141	27	18	20	3
n=209	0	18	56	25	0	89	11	0	1	39	59	0	74	26	0	67	13	9	10	1

Table 4.7 Comparison between STUDY and CONTROL groups' variables

Key: 0 = no response given (for all attributes); **Age:** 1 = 17 years and below; 2 = 18 and 19 years old; 3 = 20 and above years old; **Sex:** 1 = male; 2 = female; SES (family socio-economic status, as perceived by the respondent): 1 = rich; 2 = middle; 3 = poor; **Place** (location of the school the respondent has come from): 1 = urban; 2 = rural; **Mother tongue** (respondent's first language): 1 = Amharic; 2 = Oromigna; 3 = Tigrigna; 4 = other Ethiopian languages; 5 = non-Ethiopian languages.

ability), and the role of the instructor in the study. The explanations are accompanied by demonstrations. Regarding the group discussion sessions, the instructors have focused on how students could form groups, select and assign learning tasks for study and discussion among group members, and seek for help, if needed, from instructors. After the series of orientations, a placement test taken from the *SRA* reading package (section 4.335 below for the description of these materials) is administered and a guiding level for each student is established Each student finds out his/her appropriate reading level as soon as it is established using the *SRA* guide for instructors (*SRA* Teacher's Guide 1985).

4.33 Tests and teaching materials

4.331 The questionnaire

As already mentioned, a questionnaire is administered to both the study and control groups to elicit information about the students' background and their knowledge about the reading process and reading strategies prior to the launching of the programme. The basic contents of the questionnaire remain the same as the ones used for the pilot study (see section 4.231 above; ***Appendix 2.2***). However, the instructions and some selected phrases in the questionnaire have been made clearer and more explicit according to the recommendations made by the instructors who have administered the questionnaire with the pilot group.

A second questionnaire with almost the same format and content has also been prepared and administered after the end of the first semester of the 1990-91 academic year (***Appendix 2.3***). Besides all the information needed about the subjects' knowledge of the reading process and strategies, the second questionnaire is designed to include information about students' attitude towards the individualised reading programme they have been following for one semester (***Appendix 3.12***). It should be noted here that the basic objective of these questionnaires is to observe any changes in students' awareness of the reading process and the use of the appropriate reading strategies and if this could be attributed to the individualised reading programme. The analysis of the students' responses to both the questionnaires is given in section 5.3113 Chapter 5 below.

Another questionnaire is given to the instructors involved in the study at the end of the programme. This is aimed at getting instructor reactions to the individualised reading programme regarding its efficacy and feasibility. Their responses are discussed in section 5.4 Chapter 5.

4.332 The reading comprehension tests

These tests are taken from the same source mentioned in section 4.222 above, for the same reasons mentioned in this section (***Appendix 4***). There are two sets of the reading comprehension test - one for pretest and another for post test. Initially, it was planned that there would be three sets to serve as pretest, mid-test and post test with the same level of difficulty. However, the latter was dropped because the study had to be discontinued at the beginning of the second semester of the 1990-91 academic year. The reading comprehension results of the pretest and post test of the study and control groups are discussed in section 5.321 Chapter 5 below.

4.333 The readability tests

It has been indicated above that the cloze procedure is used to analyze the readability of the selected first year course books as indicated in section 4.222 above (section 3.2221 Chapter 3). It was originally planned that selections would be made from all the students' first year four course books - geography, history, philosophy and political economy. The course books for Quantitative Methods and Freshman English were not considered. However, in the 1990-91 academic year, students were not required to take Marxist Philosophy and Marxist Political Economy due to a change in government policy (section 2.44 in Chapter 2 above). Hence, there were no established prerequisite courses with official course books that replaced the courses mentioned above for that year. The mentioned courses were reduced to being electives. As a result not many students registered for these courses. So,the selections were made from the geography and history course books (***Appendix 5.1*** and ***Appendix 5.2***), and the steps mentioned in section 4.222 above were followed to prepare two sets of readability tests for geography and history for pre-test and post-test. The results are discussed in section 5.322 Chapter 5.

4.334 General English language ability tests

It is quite logical to assume that the Freshman English 101A and Freshman English 101B examination papers reflect the official objectives of the service English courses in the university. Most instructors ask to be informed about the format and scope of the examination at the beginning of the semester. The instructors cover the portions well in time and train their students to enable them to pass the exams. These exams might have their own drawbacks (Teshome 1992); however, in light of the fact that they remain the sole yardstick for a pass or failure in the two service English courses, they could be selected and assumed to have the same level of difficulty to assess the linguistic improvements of the students concerned. Two sets of Freshman English 101A and two sets of Freshman English 101B tests are selected from the past examination papers, and one set consisting of Freshman English 101A and Freshman English 101B is administered at the beginning of the programme. The question of a difference in level of difficulty between the two sets of tests, or even more important (as indicated above), whether the tests satisfy the basic requirements of good tests have been considered as unimportant since they are equally officially acknowledged to certify more or less the same linguistic knowledge outlined in the course books, and they are acknowledged as official tests, whether they are bad or good. The students' raw scores (both in pretest and post test and their scores in the first semester official Freshman English 101A) and their analysis is provided in section 5.323 Chapter 5.

4.335 The teaching materials

In section 4.3133 above,it is pointed out that the ***ELSIP***, as the way they have been used, have not proved to be effective in generating the required level of confidence in students to embark upon independent work, though quite a number of the students have reported that they like the materials (section 5.211 Chapter 5; ***Appendix 3.11***). Some students seem to be unclear of what to do with the booklets identified for them. They usually wait for specific tasks to be given or instructions to be spelled out instead of trying to set them for themselves. There are no exercises whatsoever accompanying the booklets; and quite a number of the students seem to want these (section 5.211 Chapter 5). One other factor

that seems to have made the process more difficult than it should be is the fact that the students have not been provided with workbooks that should accompany the materials.

So, with the corpus study it is decided that the 1985 edition of the ***SRA*** reading packages would be used to facilitate the smooth transition from the conventional methods of learning reading to individualised reading. Despite the fact that the ***SRA*** materials overemphasise habit formation and programmed learning (Boey 1976; Eskey 1973; Nisbet and Shucksmith 1986:71), it is believed that the reading collections and exercises could be adapted to serve the purpose of independent learning (Lunzer and Gardner 1979; Fawcett 1979; Davis and Widdowson 1974). The reading passages and exercises on reading strategies have proved to help many students (section 5.3111 Chapter 5; ***Appendix 3.12***). The ***SRA*** materials, according to the editors of these collections (1985:7), are based on the following assumptions:

> *4.3351 learners differ in both their learning rate and capacity* - thus each learner can do any sets of exercises (reading comprehension, vocabulary building or reading speed) he/she feels he/she needs to improve his/her ability to read in English for academic purposes.
>
> *4.3352 the increased use of self-supporting, self-corrected materials that provide immediate and long range feedback can result in more efficient training in the use of many skills*. The student gets the feedback from his/her own work. The instructor intervenes when he/she feels that the student is in a problem and cannot proceed.
>
> ***4.3353 a student should be allowed to see and feel his/her progress.*** Each learner draws three graphs for each reading lesson for all sessions. These graphs provide him/her with some visual representation of his/her reading ability.
>
> ***4.3354*** by conducting training and education - skill getting and skill using - schooling becomes not preparation for life but life itself - thus pinning down the task to a level in which individual interests and involvement could be facilitated.

The student is engaged in reading to enhance his/her background knowledge. All other factors being constant, the learner learns how to learn.

Most of these assumptions form the groundwork of independent learning. The ***SRA*** reading exercises are designed to help students to exercise common reading strategies which include whole/part thinking, seeing relationships (cause-effect, similarities-differences), sequence and organisation, and inference and conclusion (Figure 3.2 Chapter 3). These skills and strategies are added as brief subhead or instruction with each question to alert the student-reader (Fawcett 1979).

The ***SRA*** reading exercises on comprehension and speed, and vocabulary are used to facilitate and engender independent work. It is assumed that students would ultimately move into the ***ELSIP*** and other selected materials for independent and advanced reading. The emphasis is on individualised reading, and students are encouraged to read intensively and extensively in order to help them develop their background knowledge and awareness of learning (Nuttal 1982). However, as indicated (section 1.3 Chapter 1; section 2.44 Chapter 2), students could not go beyond the ***SRA*** because of the university's closure during the second semester of 1990-91 academic year.

4.34 Mode of study

4.341 The control group

The control group followed the conventional method using the Freshman English 101A course book. In general terms, the language lessons were structure dominated with overt grammar explanation and practice, and consisted of exercises on specifically listed vocabulary, and reading passages followed by wh- or multiple choice questions. The students in this group were expected to cover all the units for the semester as specified by the Freshman English Testing Committee. Students were told to read the reading passages silently, or sometimes instructors read them for the whole class, and were asked to do the exercises that followed. The instructors supplied correct answers. The vocabulary and structure sections were done in the same manner. The teachers explicitly

explained the notes, either the glossary for the vocabulary or the grammatical notes for the structure and usage, and the students were supposed to learn these and do the usually fill-in exercises on vocabulary, and structure and usage (section 1.11 and section 1.12 Chapter 1).

4.342 The study group

There were two modes of learning. These were the individualised reading sessions conducted in the Spoken English laboratory and the group discussion sessions in the students' respective classrooms. Below is the common outline of the various learning activities students were engaged in.

4.3421 Two sessions of individualised reading per week

The students in the study group were engaged in the following learning activities using the ***SRA*** reading materials.

4.34211 They identified (usually with the help of the teacher) their level of reading and selected the appropriate reading cards for developing their reading comprehension and speed and vocabulary power. Students usually informed their instructors whether the reading levels of the cards they read were difficult, appropriate or easy, and asked if they could read the levels of their choice; some, of course, remained teacher-dependent throughout the entire programme.

4.34212 They recorded their achievement in reading comprehension and speed and vocabulary in their workbook. They indicated their achievement on a graph drawn on the last page of their workbook. The graph visually indicated to the student his/her cumulative performance in reading comprehension, speed and word power.

Besides helping in the planning and organising of the programme, the instructors were also engaged in the various activities that would facilitate the process. Some of the work included the following.

4.34213 They helped their students in finding appropriate reading cards. Once the students got used to the system, they started to undertake the work by themselves. At the initial stages, group leaders assisted the instructors to avoid any crowding and delay in selecting appropriate reading cards. However, later, individual students managed to handle this successfully by themselves.

4.34214 They also helped those students who had some reading problems as identified by their continuous follow-up. They gave appropriate guidance to those students who needed help - such as recommending remedial and additional work for the weaker students, and advanced work and reading for those who were ready to take up the task. This was mostly done during the discussion period but some instructors advised their students to see them in their offices for further guidance.

4.34215 They encouraged students to read better, faster and learn effective methods of developing vocabulary. They recommended the exploitation of whatever was available in the *SRA* resource. Besides the regular reading comprehension cards (power builders) and the reading speed cards (rate builders), they encouraged students to use the additional materials on developing higher skills of reading comprehension and vocabulary.

4.34216 They kept follow-up records of the performance of their students. They collected students' workbooks when convenient and assessed their students' comments on their own performance and learning progress. They sometimes discussed the students' comments (written in their work books) about their own reading successes or failures, or plans for improvement, and asked them how realistic they were in setting their targets.

4.34217 They compiled efficient and inefficient ways of reading from their observation and their students' workbooks to serve as topics for discussion during the discussion period (*Appendix 3.2*).

4.3422 One session per week of group work

Students grouped themselves into five or six, depending on class size, and engaged themselves in group activities demanding the participation of all members of the group. The activities included most of the following:

> *4.34221* They drafted a plan of work or schedule for discussing the grammatical items and the exercises specified in Freshman English 101A, and shared the portions among themselves for study on their own and later for presentation and discussion within the group.
>
> *4.34222* The students asked for any assistance they sought regarding,for instance, the explanation of a certain grammatical item. During the discussions the instructor provided the students with suggested answers to selected exercises and made it clear to them that in learning the language it was not the mere answering of the exercises that was important but the discussions and further study they did individually and in groups.
>
> *4.34223* They assigned themselves more exercises to be done at home and then for discussion in class.

In addition to the follow-up that they were supposed to do, instructors used their expertise to generate ideas that facilitated the programme. The following were among the common activities they were engaged in.

> *4.34224* Instructors were involved in checking whether all students were doing all the exercises their group selected. Most students did their assigned jobs with interest and involvement.
>
> *4.34225* Instructors participated with students in a group in the discussion of the language items or others, such as problems of reading with speed and comprehension.

4.34226 Depending on agreed schedule of the work, instructors took time to explain and demonstrate effective ways of writing reports and summaries as these were felt essential for promoting the discussion classes, and useful for all the courses the students took and the students reported they needed for their courses.

4.34227 Sometimes instructors invited the whole class to listen to an explanation that they might give on, say, the assessment of reading performance, vocabulary development or writing a paragraph or studying grammar - any topic or item that needed elaboration to the whole class.

4.34228 Instructors marked any assignments given to individual students. Those students who asked for more exercises to be given, such as exercises on grammar or composition, were given their choices and instructors gave their guidance to those who needed it. In fact, as Altman (1980:15) recommends, this programme required of the teacher "... all of the technical skills utilized in curriculum-centred and teacher-centred pedagogy, and much more."

This pattern was followed throughout the study period - from September 1990 to January 1991. The researcher participated in demonstrating the recommended procedure with all the study groups. At the initial stages, it was not so easy for both instructors and students to exercise the mode of study. However, after a few weeks, they were able not only to follow the recommended style but they were also contributing to its development and subsequent modification. At the end of the first semester, the post test package was administered. A questionnaire for the students (section 4.331 above) and another for the instructors were administered. The results of the questionnaires are summarized in section 5.31, for students, and section 5.4, for instructors, Chapter 5.

CHAPTER FIVE

Analysis of results

5.1 Introduction

Current research confirms that reading is an interactive process (Grabe 1991). As Williams and Moran (1989:218)) indicate, "the currently prevailing research-based view of reading, whether in L1 or L2, is that it is an interactive process, involving knowledge of the world and various types of language knowledge, any of which may interact with any other to contribute to text comprehension." Thus, reading research emphasizes the importance of the mass of knowledge, or background knowledge, the reader brings into the reading situation to reconstruct meaning from a text. As Huey (1968) argues, the reader's understanding of a text is the result of his/her reconstruction and not the mere transmission of the graphic symbols to his/her mind. The capacity to reconstruct meaning is constrained by the reader's background knowledge. It has been indicated (section 3.221 Chapter 3) that a text does not by itself carry meaning. As Rumelhart (1980) argues, a text only provides directions for readers as to how they should retrieve or construct meaning from their background knowledge or abstract knowledge structure (schemata). Similarly, "schema theory research shows that the greater the background knowledge a reader has of a text's content area, the better the reader will comprehend that text" (Carrell 1988c:244-245). On the other hand, the absence of an appropriate schema or schema specificity of a text - for instance, cultural (Stefensen and Joag-Dev 1984) or discipline (Alderson and Urquhart 1988) specific - may impair L2 reading.

Moreover, Eskey and Grabe (1988) examine the role of the knowledge of grammar and vocabulary in L2 reading from the point of view of the models of reading discussed in section 3.21 (Chapter 3). While noting that a top down model is only a model of fluent L1 readers, they also assert that it does not give due emphasis to the knowledge of grammatical structures as a prerequisite for fluent L2 reading. An interactive model, on the other hand, accounts for the conspicuous bottom up processing problems of L2

readers. Eskey and Grabe (1988:226) point out that regarding vocabulary "much evidence that supports an interactive model suggests ... that poor readers simply have not acquired automatic decoding skills. They therefore spend much more processing time in guessing from the context, which is just the sort of skill a top down model suggests is lacking." So, it is argued that the common problem of most L2 readers is not that they do not guess but that they overdo it and overdo it inaccurately.

Models are simplified constructs of a process. They cannot embody the reading process in its entirety. As Eskey and Grabe (1988:227-228) argue,

> for one thing, such models are ...models of the ideal, completely fluent reader with completely developed knowledge systems and skills; whereas the second language reader is, almost by definition, a developing reader with gaps and limitations in both of these categories. For another, we have no clear idea at this time of how readers in general combine bottom up and top down processes, much less how particular readers do so.

All these may constrain the models to be of great practical value to L2 reading instruction. So, the practice of developing L2 reading cannot be merely reduced to the translation of these models into practical classroom prescriptions. All the variables affecting ESL/EFL reading classroom situations should be taken into consideration when designing an approach to developing reading in English for academic purposes.

Research (section 2.6 and section 2.7 Chapter 2) indicates that the social science first year students do not have adequate experience in reading in English and the service English courses have not helped much to improve the students' reading ability in English. The service English courses in the university, with their emphasis on teaching usage or the formal descriptions of a language, promote the assumption that the mastery of usage would enable students to read their academic courses in English. It seems that this assumption has, as a result, discouraged the attempt to help students to develop their reading ability - mastery of the language rules has been taken as all what students need. It is assumed that if they master the language, as the Freshman English courses in Addis Ababa University seem to imply, they can become fluent readers. It has been pointed out that such an approach was prevalent elsewhere in the late 1970s and early 1980s (section

3.1 Chapter 3). However, it seems that this approach to reading instruction in the university has not helped to narrow the gap between the students' reading ability and the readability level of their course books (Gebremedhin 1988; section 2.6 Chapter 2).

Strictly speaking, thi gap (the gap between prior knowledge and the required knowledge) can be qualified as the lack of what Eskey and Grabe (1988) term as the 'critical mass of knowledge', or, according to schema theorists, the essential systemic and schematic knowledge (Widdowson 1990). Elsewhere in this study, it is termed as background knowledge. Regarding this gap, some major assumptions could be made:

> Firstly, it may not be possible to explicitly describe the gap in quantitative terms - results extracted from administering language tests, such as reading comprehension tests or even readability formulae (cloze tests in this case) may not qualify the gap in the process of reading. As Alderson (1984) argues "doing a comprehension test and actually reading are probably not the same thing". Moreover, it might be assumed that students may understand a text but they may lack the combined knowledge of syntax and lexis to supply a required item in a cloze test, for instance (Alderson 1984). While the tests may emphasize the knowledge of discrete linguistic elements, the gap referred to is a combination of all the components of the reading process that may not possibly be represented in numerical terms. In other words, results of such tests may yield a partial explanation of the process of reading. By implication, as Alderson (1984) argues, it is not clear that testing, or its outcome, is relevant to teaching.
>
> Secondly, the gap is variable among the population. It is constrained by individual differences (Dickinson 1987; Clark 1987) accentuated by various factors including the educational, socio-cultural and linguistic background discussed in section 2.2 and section 2.3 (Chapter 2). Thus, firstly, it might be misleading to assume that all learners need the same learning items; secondly, it might be difficult to list the learning items in a generally acceptable way; and lastly, the learning outcome "is not just that a certain bit of the syllabus is taught, or a certain planned method is used, or that a certain planned atmosphere is created", but "it will be the result of

interactive processes, and therefore necessarily different from any plans" (Allwright and Bailey 1991:22-3). It is claimed that this, that is, the interactive process, is what may bridge the gap. Moreover, the question of the listing of foreign language learning items in general *per se* has remained as the source for controversy in language teaching for specific purposes for many years, and applied linguists do not have the same approach to the issue (see, for instance, on issues of ELT syllabus design, Brumfit 1984; or ELT curriculum and instruction, Clark 1987, White 1987).

Thirdly, based on the survey of the above reading (section 3.3 Chapter 3) and by assuming language instruction as a component of the educational process (Widdowson 1983), it is believed that students could be helped to bridge the gap by taking the activity as a short term objective in the process of learning to learn and learning through discovery (Holec 1980; Rogers 1983). It is believed that no one can explain the gap better than the learners themselves. This approach stipulates that learners are at the centre of the teaching learning process (Dickinson 1987). A learner centred approach dictates that learners are active participants in the process of educating themselves and learning is not equated with the mere decoding of discrete linguistic elements from teachers and course books.

And finally, attempts to bridge this gap can be tied to the major educational objectives of the university, that is, to promote independent learning which is characteristic of many institutions of higher learning worldwide. As it is stated in section 2.7 Chapter 2 above, Abebe (1987) argues that *teaching as telling* has to give way to *learning how to learn* - a change of focus from looking for an *elaborate* language teaching methodology to an approach (Allwright and Bailey 1991) to facilitating students' *learning to learn.*

It has been pointed out that this gap is created because of the students' lack of the 'critical mass of knowledge' or background knowledge, defined in broad terms. The question addressed in the current study (section 1.1 Chapter 1) is whether it is possible to help students develop their background knowledge (systemic and schematic) to enhance their

ability in reading in English for academic purposes. So, the study is an attempt to test the feasibility of a possible approach to reading instruction that helps students to develop their ability to read in English for academic purposes.

Admittedly, as Eskey and Grabe (1988) point out, whatever the design of a reading programme, there are at least three programme constants:

> The first is the *quantity of reading*. Any programme designed to facilitate students' reading ability considers allowing students to do enough reading. No programme of reading can claim the name without allowing students to do some reading. Eskey and Grabe (1988) argue that students learn to read by reading, not by doing exercises. Nuttal (1982) shares a similar view.
>
> The second is the *relevance of the materials to students' needs and interests.* Elsewhere it has been stated that the materials selected for reading should help students to learn to read their academic course books. The materials should also provide students with the experience to trial various reading strategies without the students feeling that they are being *tested* (section 3.2221 Chapter 3).
>
> The last programme constant is the *role of the teacher.* The teacher of reading in a foreign language has the special responsibility for encouraging students to read in a language that is specifically used for academic purposes. He/she has the responsibility for setting the environment for reading, providing suggested reading materials, and, most important, handling learner training sessions, for instance, in individualised reading programmes (section 4.2 and section 4.3 Chapter 4).

In the preceding chapter, it has been stated that the students in the study group during the pilot and the main study sessions have been provided with ***ELSIP*** and ***SRA*** reading materials respectively as suggested materials for developing reading fluency. As described above (section 3.222 Chapter 3), these collections provide ample and interesting reading materials for L2 learners. Moreover, the two reading packages were used mainly for the following two major reasons:

firstly, there are no well designed and appropriate reading packages in the university that provide various reading exercises on different issues of some international significance. The packages are claimed to include a variety of interesting texts, and specially the ***SRA***, it is asserted, provide ample reading exercises to promote language learning and facilitate the confidence in one's ability to learn with success (Fawcett 1979). However, the rationale for using these materials with the study groups is not to establish or test the level of effectiveness of these materials, but to provide learners with some reading materials that they can experiment with the effectiveness of their learning and reading styles and strategies. Of course, it is admitted that these materials provide learners with some schematic and systemic input that may help them to bridge the gap mentioned to a significant degree.

Secondly, the prevailing student-teacher expectations (or rather the officially accepted practice in the university) dictate that students are under obligation to use materials prescribed by the teacher, and the teacher is supposed to come with a set of learning items (the syllabus) and materials (the realizations of the official syllabus) considered as decisive for success at least in the service English courses. Thus, the institutional demands on teachers and students alike necessitates the prescription of a certain package of reading materials to be used as the 'course book' for the service English course.

Accordingly, the study classes have preferred to follow the above reading packages. It has been indicated that the ***ELSIP*** consist of interesting graded reading books (section 3.2221 Chapter 3) and it is assumed that students will find them quite relevant to satisfy their academic needs. Some researchers report successes in promoting fluent reading and language improvement using a flood of reading materials similar to the graded readers of the ***ELSIP***. Frankel (1982), and Elley and Mangubhai (1983)[1] report the effectiveness of such readers especially, in promoting students' bottom up and top down skills of

[1]They conducted an experiment for a period of two years. It is understood that the researchers reported that their subjects showed an improvement in their linguistic performance. The success may be partially explained by the length of the time the experiment lasted.

reading (Carrell 1988c). The exercises in the *SRA* reading package are believed to provide appropriate 'scaffolding' for most students who have not had enough reading in English for academic purposes (Tumposky 1982 mentions that some learners prefer to use structured materials to give them the sense of feeling that they are learning). The exercise sections provide various items for learner training - vocabulary developing, writing stories, developing specific reading skills and increasing reading speed, and reading awareness (Fawcett 1979).

In Chapter 4 (section 4.1), it has been argued that the teacher's role is decisive in realizing individualised reading in English for academic purposes. He/she attends to individual learning interests, progress and motivation. He/she co-ordinates both the lab and group discussion work (Richards 1990), undertakes the task of learner training in the entire programme to help students to develop language learning awareness. In practical terms, the teacher helps each student to select learning materials, to develop specific and general linguistic skills and to evaluate one's progress (Holec 1980; Dickinson 1987).

This chapter analyzes the results of the experiment on individualised reading in English for academic purposes in the first year of the College of Social Sciences, Addis Ababa University, as designed in the preceding chapter. It focuses on the written responses of both students and teachers who participated in the study and the student performance results in reading comprehension tests and general English language examination as measured by the official Freshman English 101A and Freshman English 101B test papers. It also assesses student reading strategies before and after the study. In short, this chapter investigates the effectiveness of the individualised reading instruction as an approach to develop the ability to read in English for academic purposes with special emphasis given to the assumed changes in students' background knowledge. This change is qualified, according to the major objectives of the study, as significant increase in performance in reading comprehension, readability and general English language tests in particular, and changes in students' reading strategies as indicated on a metacognitive questionnaire described in Table 4.3 Chapter 4 (see also ***Appendix 2***). Section 5.2 describes the findings of the pilot study. Section 5.3 features the empirical results of the main study.

5.2 The pilot study

In Chapter 4 (section 4.2), it is stated that the pilot study was undertaken in the second semester of the 1989-90 academic year. This study deserves due attention mainly because of the foreshortening of the corpus study, thus the need for the results of the pilot study to validate the results of the corpus study; and, moreover, the *SRA* reading cards were used during the corpus study because the majority of the students during the pilot study seeemed to prefer structured materials, such as the *SRA* reading cards, to the unstructured *ELSIP* materials that were made avialable for them. This chapter analyzes the results of the pilot study with special emphasis on student reports about their progress in learning to read, and their results on tests of reading comprehension, readability of selected academic course books, and general English language for Addis Ababa University first year social science students.

5.21 Reports of students on their experience of 'learning to read' in EAP

In the preceding chapter, it has been stated that students are expected to report about their progress and problems they face in reading in a form provided by the teacher (Table 4.5 Chapter 4 above) for follow up purposes. This section is intended to provide a thematic categorization of the reports that have significant bearing on the major objective of the study. The compiled reports are provided in ***Appendix 3.11***. The attempt to edit the students' original reports is mainly restricted to those statements that are vague due to linguistic errors. The reports may be categorised as follows:

5.211 The materials used

Almost all students, with few exceptions, report that they have found the ***ELSIP*** materials interesting and helpful. They indicate that they like the materials because they are short and written in a clear language (***str[2]. 3.1112***). One student (***str. 3.118a Appendix 3.11***)

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[2]Student responses are marked as *str.* followed by the appendix number, the student number and the particular response number in letters. Thus, ***str. 3.1125a*** means student number ***25***, response letter ***a*** found in appendix *3.11*.

summarizes the reasons why he/she likes the materials in the following way[3]:

> I liked the material very much because i) it is easy to understand the main points ii) it has no difficult words to understand iii) it is easy to remember iv) easy to read as quickly as possible.

This particular student states that the materials provide interesting stories which are simple to read and are written in simple English. Another student thinks that "since such materials are prepared in a short form and a clear language I like them" (***str. 3.1112a Appendix 3.11***). The clarity of language is mentioned by another student as facilitating understanding when he/she states that "when I was reading the material it was very interesting for its simple grammatical usage, simple words. This helped to understand what the story talks about" (***str. 3.1140a Appendix 3.11***). In short, students seem to share the view that

> the story is easy to understand. There are no complex expressions or heavy vocabulary. It is really interesting story and can remember the most important of the story. There is no any expressions which are not understandable. The story is too short and simple to finish it within one period (***str. 3.1121c Appendix 3.11***).

However, some students mention some aspect of content unfamiliarity as a factor hindering their progress in reading. One student admits "the only problem - the name of places, names are new" (***str. 3.1114c Appendix 3.11***). Another student reports that "it is a little bit harder to remember the activities of each character" (***str. 3.1117b Appendix 3.11***). Still another student states that "... the story is wider and somewhat difficult to retain" (***str. 3.1125f Appendix 3.11***). It seems that a number of students have found names of places and persons unfamiliar (***str. 3.1126b, str. 3.1127c, str. 3.1145a Appendix 3.11***). In general, however, most students seem to be comfortable with the content of the ***ELSIP*** and confident with their ability to use them to develop their ability to learn to read in English for academic purposes. The majority of the students seem to support, in one form or another, the following idea expressed by one student:

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[3]Respondents' original language is retained, without being edited, as long as the meaning is not vague.

> Although I was not experienced before to read more story (fictions) this time onwards I was interested to read more, therefore this leads me to know more knowledge. Due to this reason my reading and understanding develop from day to day (***str. 3.1137 Appendix 3.11***).

5.212 The approach

Riley (1988) doubts whether or not the concept of individualisation is an expression tied to some aspect of ethnocentricity. It is true that societies with different socio-cultural phenomena sustain various educational practices to promote their particular societal value systems and needs. In other words, different societies promote specific educational values (Clark 1987) through their educational establishments. These determine, for instance, teacher-student roles, expectations, and approaches to the teaching-learning process. However, it is assumed that individualisation has some aspect of universality. The approach employed in the study, as explained in the preceding chapter, prioritizes individual involvement both in the selection and use of teaching materials, and assumes teachers facilitate the process of learner independence in learning to read in English for academic purposes. Though there might be a difference in degrees across cultures, it is believed that the features of individualisation may not be alien to conventional language classrooms (Allwright 1988) in the country. This study has assumed this phenomenon to be one of the characteristics in the English language classrooms of the first year of the College of Social Sciences, Addis Ababa University. This assumption has been employed to devise a mode of study that promotes the development of learners' background knowledge. The students involved in the study seem to find the programme quite easy to apply and appropriate to solve their problems in reading in English for academic purposes. In general terms, most students state that they have liked the programme and recommend it for its extensive use in the university. One of the students, incidentally an Egyptian, states

> I have enjoyed this semester's English classes. As a foreign learner of the English language I found very interesting and helpful the classes spent in the laboratory. ... In brief, I think these classes should be continued and practised throughout the University because it is through reading that one improves his language skills (***str.3.1143a Appendix 3.11***).

Another student admits "it is a very helpful way of learning English" (*str. 3.1139a Appendix 3.11*). In summary, most students seem to agree with the following statement:

> I got this programme very good because I progress my reading ability as well as conceptualization of the main idea of the story. And I think this programme will be effective i' it continues (*str. 3.1145c Appendix 3.11*).

Similarly, students generally claim they have gained a lot from the programme, especially linguistic knowledge (vocabulary and syntactic knowledge), but some students are more explicit in describing this:

> Reading such kind of books for me gives two important things; these are knowing about that particular job, such as ***fishing*** [emphasis mine] and get improving our reading capacity. To be frank, it is better to read books in laboratories and study the text book in our homes because the text almost gives no more additional knowledge in grammatical aspect except in some cases (*str. 3.1121d Appendix 3.11*).

5.213 The reading process

It has been mentioned above that reading as an interactive process subsumes the ability of the reader to take a series of appropriate decisions (*appropriacy* to be envisaged from the point of view of the learner - his/her needs and purposes of learning to read in English for academic purposes which are apparently dependent on individual differences such as background knowledge, learning style and strategies) (Allwright 1982; Nisbet and Shucksmith 1986; Dickinson 1987) at the various stages of learning to read and reading to learn. As Nisbet and Shucksmith (1986) point out, learning strategy refers to a consciously selected procedure with a purpose in view. The learner experiments with his/her preferred reading strategies and modifies them if he/she discovers that they are ineffective or inappropriate to achieve, for instance, comprehension. This can be taken as part of the process of learning through discovery (Rogers 1983).

Research on reading strategies is mostly based on readers' reports of their reading experiences (such as Hosenfeld's think-aloud technique, or use of introspective and

retrospective reports) (Hosenfeld 1984; Carrell 1989b). Hosenfeld states that she has focused on problem solving. "Specifically, an effort is made to uncover the kind of strategies students use in performing foreign language tasks" (1984:231) and, by identifying the specific strategies employed by successful readers, she investigates whether these could be taught to weak readers to help them improve their reading ability. Of course, the major objective of this study is not to replicate this, but to unravel the process of learning to read as a problem solving activity. In other words, the study is intended to investigate the process of learning to read as a problem solving task, for instance, finding out, from their own descriptions, what learners do to understand, for example, a word which they have found unfamiliar. It might be misleading, however, to arrive at conclusions by taking these reports word for word, as Carrell (1989b) argues. While bearing this in mind, it is possible to assess the common preferred strategies of learning to read by students in the first year of the College of Social Sciences.

Most of the protocols compiled under ***Appendix 3.1*** could be taken as portraying the actual *talkings* of learners - in the sense that the learners are talking to themselves about selecting and employing a *method that works* for solving a specific learning task. For instance, this report can be taken to embody procedures of problem identification and seeking an appropriate solution:

> Even though I am interested so much on the story when I have to read the book, some problems are faced to me that is what I have to do, and how can I understand th · story. After a little beat [bit] I started to remember what I have to do and remember the main concept and reading fastly. Generally, I improved myself in reading and looking for the general ideas of the book (***str. 3.114a Appendix 3.11***).

The reports seem to indicate that learners are not responding to predetermined sets of questions (qualified by the teacher). Students generate these questions as they progress in their learning to read. Presumably, they may not even be expecting responses from the teacher. They are reacting to the general question stated in Table 4.5 Chapter 4. Their responses represent their preferred procedures or strategies of problem solving. Typical of these are the following reports: ***str. 3.113, str. 3.1118, str. 3.1121, str. 3.1125, str. 3.1135***, and possibly ***str. 3.1145***. Here is a sample taken from ***str. 3.113b***:

> I was retarded and read few pages. B/s [i.e., because] I was managed to have some notes on the matter. As the title indicates it is the history of a country so it needs some consideration. I think that seems to be the factor which retarded me. But there is no problem in understanding the syntax, no strange words.

This statement and similar other reports seem to suggest that learners actively participate in the process of learning and can consciously modify their mode of learning to suit their needs (Dickinson 1987). These reports consist of what the students think are effective procedures for tackling learning tasks. For instance, the following student feels that he/she has to read faster for an assumed purpose without having to state that he/she is a slow reader: "this book was a little vast than that of the first book so by adding my reading speed I can finish it within 1:30 hrs. This indicates that through experience I can read two books within one hour." (***str. 3.119d Appendix 3.11***). Another feels that he/she has to slow down for an identified purpose: "I liked the material and I read very slow because the book is very interesting and attractive" (***str. 3.1110d Appendix 3.11***).

5.214 Common reading strategies and students' reading awareness

The reports indicate the various reading strategies employed by the students. One student states "when I am reading I usually look out for the general ideas that surface now and then" (***str. 3.112a Appendix 3.11***). A common strategy employed by most students seems to be like the following: "when I read fiction I focus on meaning of the sentences and looking for general ideas" (***str. 3.116a Appendix 3.11***). A more explicit strategy seems to be "my focus is on places and other tricks and events. But I don't bother about dates and others. In order to understand the story, I always, after hearing or reading, ... summarize my own general ideas." Some learners seem to be unclear about the effectiveness of using their selected reading strategy. One such student states that "I focus on everything in the story, looking for general ideas" (***str. 3.1115a Appendix 3.11***) and feels "I could see no reasons for the problems I have faced through reading these short stories" (***str. 3.1115b Appendix 3.11***).

5.22 Test results

It has been indicated that the scope of the gap between students' reading ability and the reading requirements of their lectures and course books may be assessed by administering reading comprehension and readability tests and general language ability tests. The reading comprehension tests may indicate students' degree of recall and comprehension. The readability tests are meant to assess the degree of difficulty students are likely to face when they read their academic courses in English. The general English language ability tests manifest students' competence in the language *vis-a-vis* the conventional English language requirements of the service English courses in the university. Below is provided the summary of students' performances in these tests.

The current study used ready-made tests for assessing students' reading comprehension ability and general English language improvement at the beginning and at the end of the study. Regarding the tests used for this purpose, the following assumptions were made: first, the pretest and post test versions of each test are of the same level of difficulty; and, second, the tests are appropriate to test what they are meant to test - to indicate the gains of independent learning, though it can be argued that the gains of independent learning may be better evaluated by a continuous assessment of what the learner does in the process of learning. An attempt has been made to indicate this in the analysis of the students' reports about their independent learning. The cloze tests were drawn from the first year social science course books - geography, history, philosophy and political economy. As mentioned above (section 4.2 Chapter 4), the selections were made from the beginning, middle and end of each course book, and treated as having the same level of difficulty (following Harrison 1980). It is also assumed that they could show any difference in the level of reading ability of a group of learners (following Elley 1984), though it is admitted that they are used with the knowledge of their basic constraints (section 3.2221 Chapter 3).

5.221 Reading comprehension tests

It has been indicated in section 4.22, Chapter 4, that the reading comprehension tests have

Group[4]	Test	number of stds.	means	standrd deviatn	standrd error	F-val	2-tail prob.	Pooled Variance Estimate			Separate Variance Estimate			remark
								t-value	Deg. of freedm	2-tail prob.	t-value	Deg. of freedm	2-tail prob.	
Study	pretest	54	8.5926	2.194	.299	1.27	.419	.73	93	.469	.72	80.52	.476	not signif.
Contrl	pretest	41	8.2439	2.468	.385									
Study	posttest	60	6.4333	2.110	.272	1.35	.270	-2.50	108	.014	-2.46	97.36	.015	signif.
Contrl	posttest	50	7.5200	2.451	.347									

Group	Test	number of stds.	means	standrd deviatn	standrd error	mean differ.	st.devtn differ	st.error differ.	corr.	2-tail prob.	t-value	Deg. of freedm	2-tail prob.	remark
Study	pretest	53	8.6038	2.213	.304	1.9811	2.852	.392	.135	.334	5.06	52	.000	signif.
Study	posttest	53	6.6226	2.123	.292									
Contrl	pretest	37	8.3243	2.427	.399	.7568	2.362	.388	.554	.000	1.95	36	.059	not signif.
Contrl	posttest	37	7.5676	2.566	.422									

Table 5.1 T-test for level of significance of means' difference for reading comprehension performance of the study and control groups (pilot)

[4]The first part of the table (consisting of the first five rows) shows the *t-test* for the means' difference of the study and control groups in the pretest and post test. The items on the first row are number of students who took the test, means, standard deviations, standard errors, F-value, 2-tail prob., t-value, degrees of freedom, 2-tail prob. (the last three under pooled variance estimate), t-value, degrees of freedom, 2-tail prob. (under separate variance estimate), and lastly, remark or *level of significance*.

The second part of the table (rows 7 to 11) indicates the paired samples t-test of the means' difference of each group during the pretest and the post test. The subheadings for this part (row 7) are number of students who took the test, means, standard deviations, standard errors, means' difference, standard deviation difference, standard error difference, corr., 2-tail probability, t-value, degrees of freedom, 2-tail probability, and remark (*level of significance*).

been selected from the Cambridge University Local Examinations Syndicate *First Certificate in English* paper. It is assumed that this paper uses texts for reading comprehension tests that are not strongly culture and/or discipline specific. The questions ask for both lower and higher order skills of reading. Each test has three parts. As indicated in ***Appendix 4***, there are fifteen multiple choice questions and students are expected to circle the letters of their choices. The test takes 40 minutes.

Table 5.1 above indicates the reading comprehension results of both the control and study groups during the pilot study. The scores of students in the study group who have not taken the post test are excluded. 41 and 54 students in the control and study groups respectively, have taken the reading comprehension pretest. Given the situation described in section 2.6 Chapter 2, section 4.2 Chapter 4 above, it may not be surprising to find that about 28 per cent of the control group and 13 per cent of the study group have not taken the reading comprehension pretest.

Figure 5.1 below displays the distribution of the scores in relation to the number of the students. It shows the distribution of the scores in the control and study groups in pretest and post test. In the pretest, 16 students in the control group and 8 students in the study group earn a score of 0 out of 15. Only one student in the control group scores the highest - that is, 13. The scores of the majority of the students lie between 5 and 10. The t-test[5] of the means of the scores of the two groups, indicated in Table 5.1 above, in the reading comprehension test indicates that there is no significant difference between the means. Thus, the two groups can be taken to belong to the same population that have similar reading comprehension ability.

At the end of the pilot study, (Table 5.1 above) the paired samples t-test for pretest and post test means of the scores indicates that only 53 cases can be taken as valid. The two means for these cases are calculated as 8.6038 and 6.6226, and their standard deviations are 2.213 and 2.123 for the pretest and post test respectively. It is surprising that the

[5]The statistical package used for hypothesis testing is *SPSS PC v4.01*. For hypothesis testing, the t-test has been used throughout: paired samples t-test for the means of the same group, but the means of the pretest and post test; and independent-samples t-test for different groups - the study and control - but the same test, either pretest or post test. Moreover, p = 0.05 2-tail t-test has been taken as the acceptable level of significance.

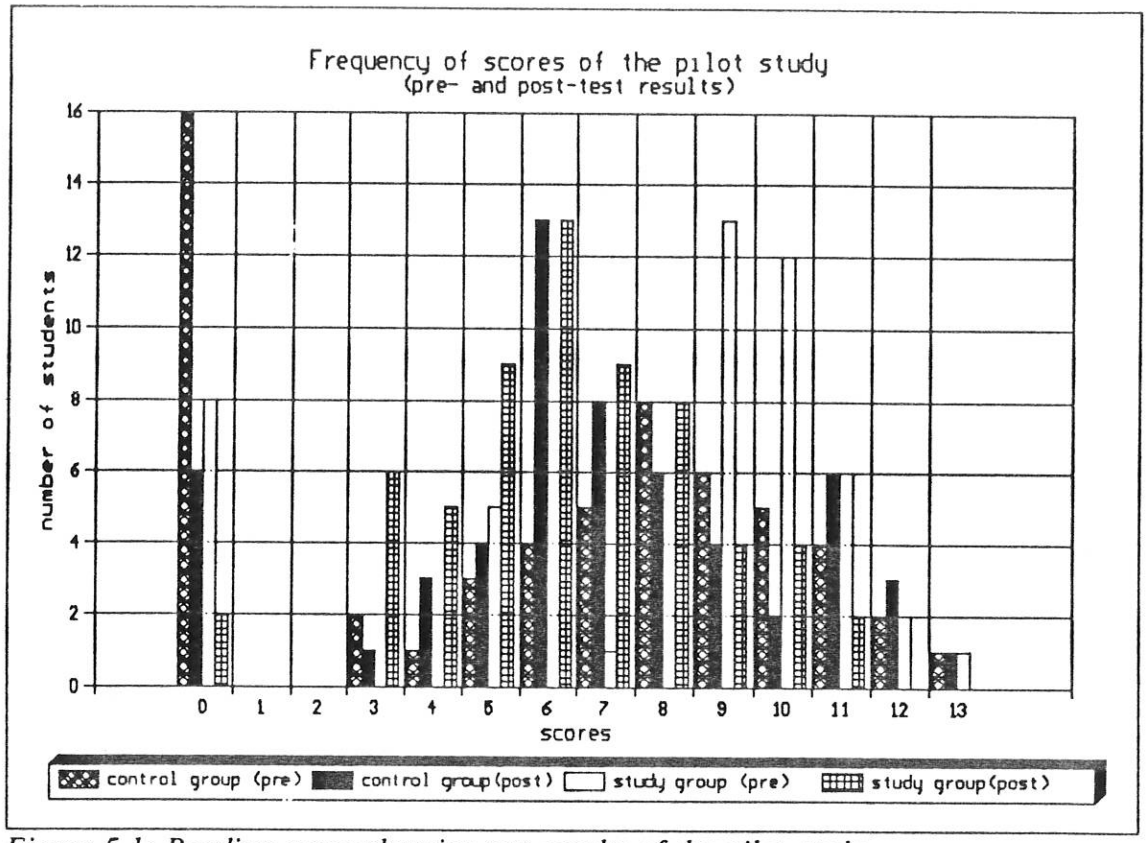

Figure 5.1: Reading comprehension test results of the pilot study

students' performance is significantly better at the beginning than at the end of the pilot study. The performance of the control group is slightly lower in the post test (means = 8.324 and 7.567 in pretest and post test respectively), and the difference could only be significant if p = 0.059. However, this does not prove that the control group have performed better than the study group at the end of the pilot study. Given the conditions discussed in section 4.1 and section 4.2 Chapter 4, it is to be anticipated that the scores in the post test reading comprehension can be unsatisfactory. Though, it might be difficult to establish that the students in general have not improved in their reading ability, it is apparent that the compiled data indicates that both groups have performed lower in the post test than in the pretest. Moreover, there is no statistical proof that the approach recommended for the study group, all other things being constant, to confirm that it has helped the concerned students to be successful readers despite the fact that the students highly recommend b ;h the approach and the materials used (see above). Thus, it cannot be claimed, at this stage, that the approach used is more effective than the conventional one in promoting the ability to read in English for academic purposes.

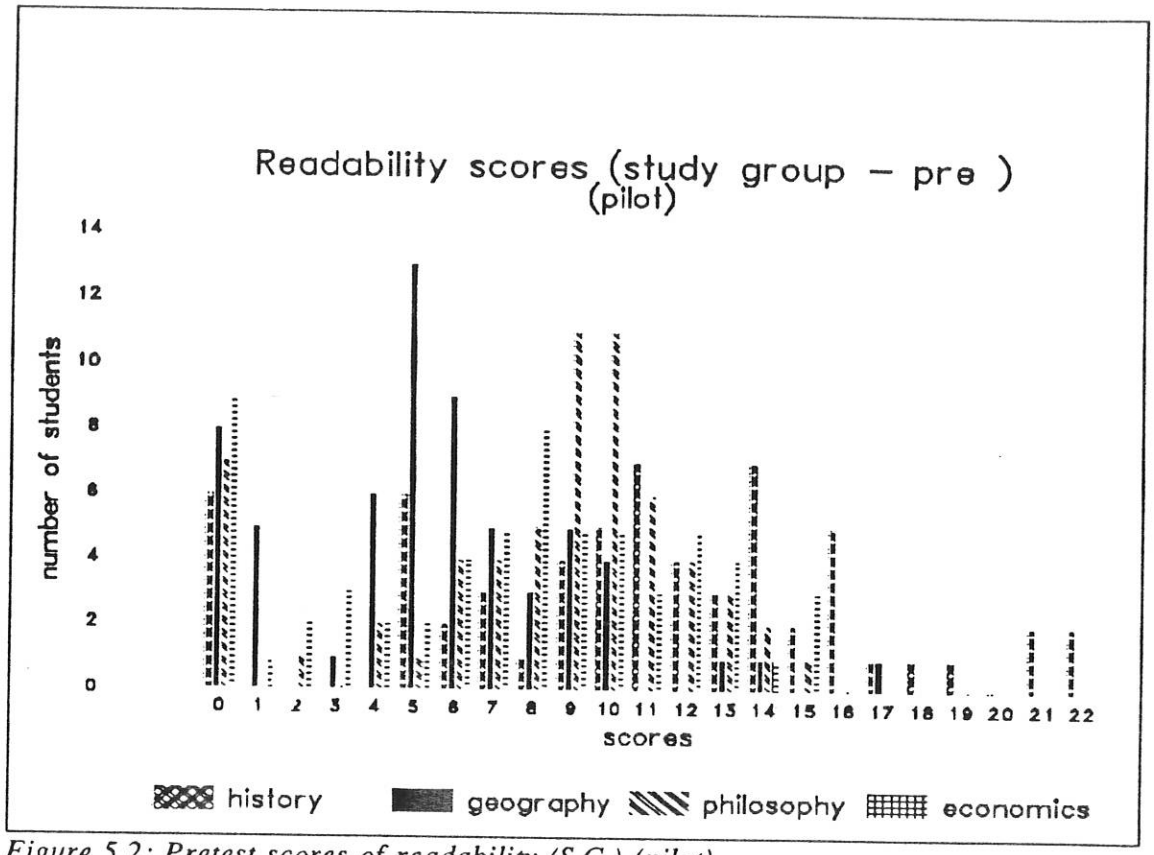

Figure 5.2: Pretest scores of readability (S.G.) (pilot)

5.222 Readability tests

It has been pointed out that the cloze procedure has been used to assess the readability level of the selected course books for social science first year students in Addis Ababa University. The courses considered are Ethiopian history, Ethiopian geography, Marxist-Leninist philosophy and political economy. The last course, Freshman English, has been excluded. As indicated above in section 4.2 and section 4.3 Chapter 4, the scores (out of 25) are to be grouped as 0 to 9 (*frustrational*), 10 to 12 (*instructional*) and 13 and above (*independent*).

As Figure 5.2, above, indicates, students in the study group find the geography course book the most difficult text followed by economics. History seems to be the easiest followed by philosophy. In fact, a large number of students in the study group (38.7 per

cent) seem to be able to handle the history course book without due help from the teacher, according to the pretest cloze tests. Table 5.2 below provides a summary of the number

Group	Test	Level	Hist[6]	Geog	Phil	Econ
Study	pretest	1	17/30[7]	47/87	28/50	32/60
		2	15/27	4/7	21/38	13/25
		3	24/43	3/6	6/11	8/15
	post test	1	49/84	50/83	53/88	52/91
		2	7/12	9/15	6/10	2/4
		3	2/3	1/2	1/2	0/0
Control	pretest	1	17/36	30/86	20/39	33/66
		2	10/21	4/11	23/45	12/24
		3	20/43	1/3	8/17	5/10
	post test	1	40/78	40/83	44/90	37/84
		2	10/20	7/15	4/8	6/14
		3	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2

Table 5.2 Levels of readability of social science freshman course books - pilot study

of students classified according to each readability level for each course book in the pretest and post test. According to Table 5.2, students' performance in the post test cloze is lower than the in pretest one. However, this may not be easy to supply the reasons for the poor performance.

The t-test of the pretest means of the scores on history by the two groups (number of valid cases = 56 and 47; means = 11.78 and 11.34; st.dev. 4.739 and 4.285 for the study and control groups respectively) depicts that the two groups have the same level of ability. Similarly, the t-tests of the pretest means of the scores on geography (number of valid

[6]Hist stands for history; Geog, for geography; Phil, for philosophy, and Econ, for economics first year social science courses. The numbers under the level column indicate **1**, *frustrational*; **2**, *instructional*; and **3**, *independent* levels of readability.

[7]The first number is the number of students in the given level for the course book indicated above. The number after the slash (/) indicates the percentage.

cases = 54 and 35; means = 6.2778 and 5.9714; st.dev. 3.153 and 3.157 - study and control respectively), philosophy (number of valid cases = 55 and 51; means = 9.309 and 10.039; st. dev. = 2.62 and 2.01 - study and control respectively), and economics (number of valid cases = 53 and 50; means = 8.566 and 7.640; st.dev. 3.576 and 3.463) indicate that the two groups belong to the same population. In other words, there is no significant difference between the means of the study and control groups in the particular subject. However, the number of students falling into each of the three conventional levels of cloze performance varies slightly as indicated above.

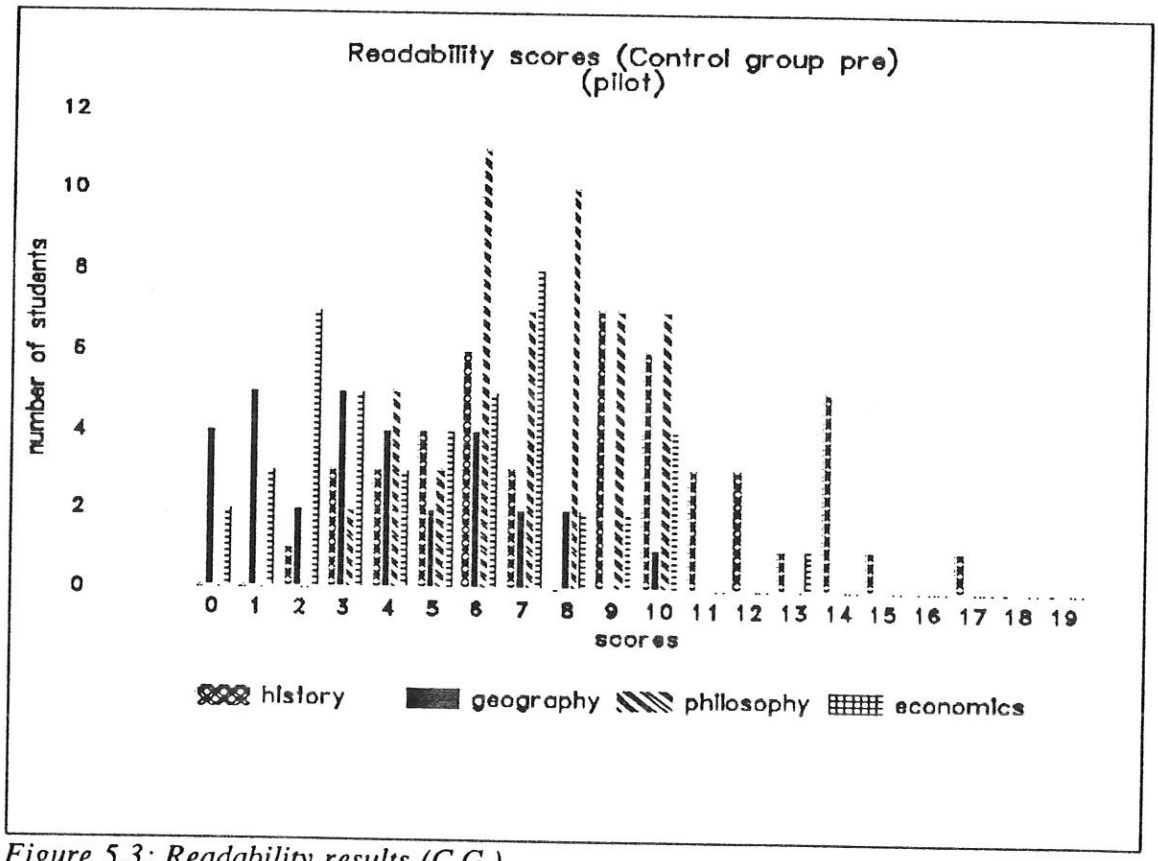

Figure 5.3: Readability results (C.G.)

The control group have found the geography text book the most difficult (86 per cent), and the history course book, the easiest (36 per cent). A large percentage (43 per cent) of the control group can independently handle the history course book, that is, this percentage of the control group is not likely to seek teacher's help in reading the mentioned course book for understanding. 45 per cent of the group can read the philosophy course book with some help from the teacher. However, an insignificant

percentage of the control group (only 3 per cent) is able to read the geography course book without a teacher's help. A similar comment can be made about the performance of the study group in the cloze pretest from Table 5.2 above. In sum, according to the cloze pretest results, both groups find the geography course book difficult, and the history course book easy to handle.

Figures 5.4 and 5.5 below indicate the numbers of students who fall into the above categories - *frustrational* (0-9), *instructional* (10-12) and *independent* (13 and above) - in the four course books according to the cloze post test results. Figure 5.4 shows the distribution of the numbers of the students in the study group in the three major bands.

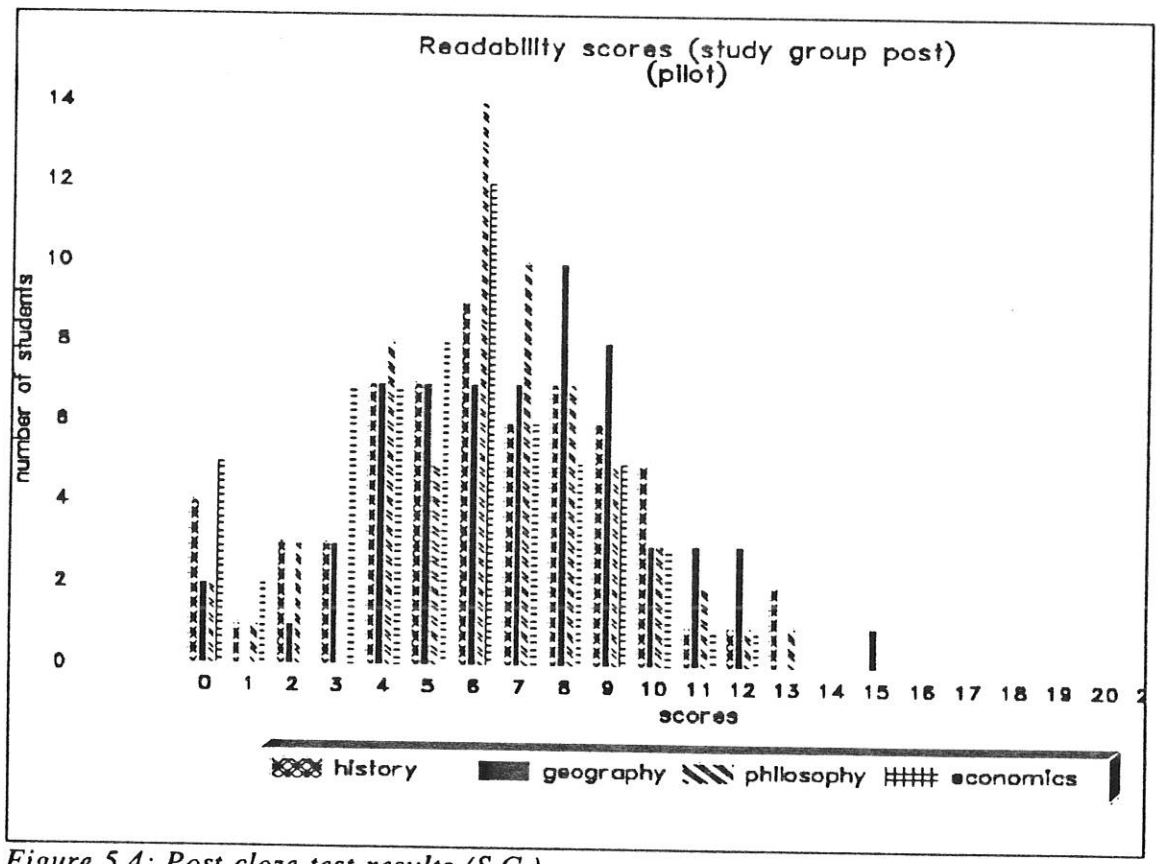

Figure 5.4: Post cloze test results (S.G.)

However, like in the pretest, the post test results indicate that the majority of the students fall into the first band, that is, *frustrational*, for almost all of the courses. The percentage of students in the third ability band, that is, *independent*, is apparently insignificant. It is only 3 per cent for history, 2 per cent for geography, 2 per cent for philosophy and none for economics. Unlike in the pretest, the majority of the students in the study group

have scored low - generally lower than in the pretest. The percentage of students for *frustrational* level in the specified course books - history, geography, philosophy and economics (in that order) is 84 per cent, 83 per cent, 88 per cent and 91 per cent. Only 12 per cent, 15 per cent, 10 per cent and 4 per cent respectively of the students in the study group can read the above mentioned course books with some help from their teachers (Table 5.2 above).

The t-tests of the means of the post tests on history (valid cases = 58 and 59; means = 6.62 and 6.33; st.dev. 2.777 and 3.296 - for study and control), geography (valid cases = 60 and 48; 7.18 and 7.13; and st.dev. 2.68 and 2.72 - for the study and control groups), philosophy (valid cases = 60 and 49; means = 6.60 and 6.67; and st.dev. 2.45 and 2.47 -for study and control), and economics (valid cases = 57 and 44; means = 6.035 and 6.295; and st.dev. 2.42 and 3.38 - for study and control groups) indicate that the pair of means for each course are not significantly different. In other words, the compiled data is not enough to warrant that the study group have done better than the control group in the cloze tests drawn from the respective course books.

Similarly, the paired samples t-tests of the pretest and post test results of the study group depict that the performance of the students has either dropped (for history: valid cases= 52; means = 11.73 and 6.50; st.dev. = 4.88 and 2.697; difference significant at $p < 0.05$; for philosophy: valid cases = 53, means = 9.1887 and 6.5472, st.dev. 2.55 and 2.546; difference significant at $p < 0.05$; and for economics: valid cases =49, means 8.57 and 5.857, st.dev. 3.669 and 2.449; difference significant at $p < 0.05$) or remained relatively the same (for geography: cases = 52, means 6.26 and 6.98, st.dev. 3.17 and 2.69; the difference between the means - not significant at $p = 0.05$).

Figure 5.5 below shows the number of students in the control group in relation to the cloze post test scores in the four course books. Like the students in the study group mentioned above, the students in the control group have not scored better in the post test than in the pretest. In fact, a negligible percentage (2 per cent each for all the course books) is represented in the third ability band - *independent* level. This is lower than the percentage indicated in the pretest. The percentages for the second ability band -

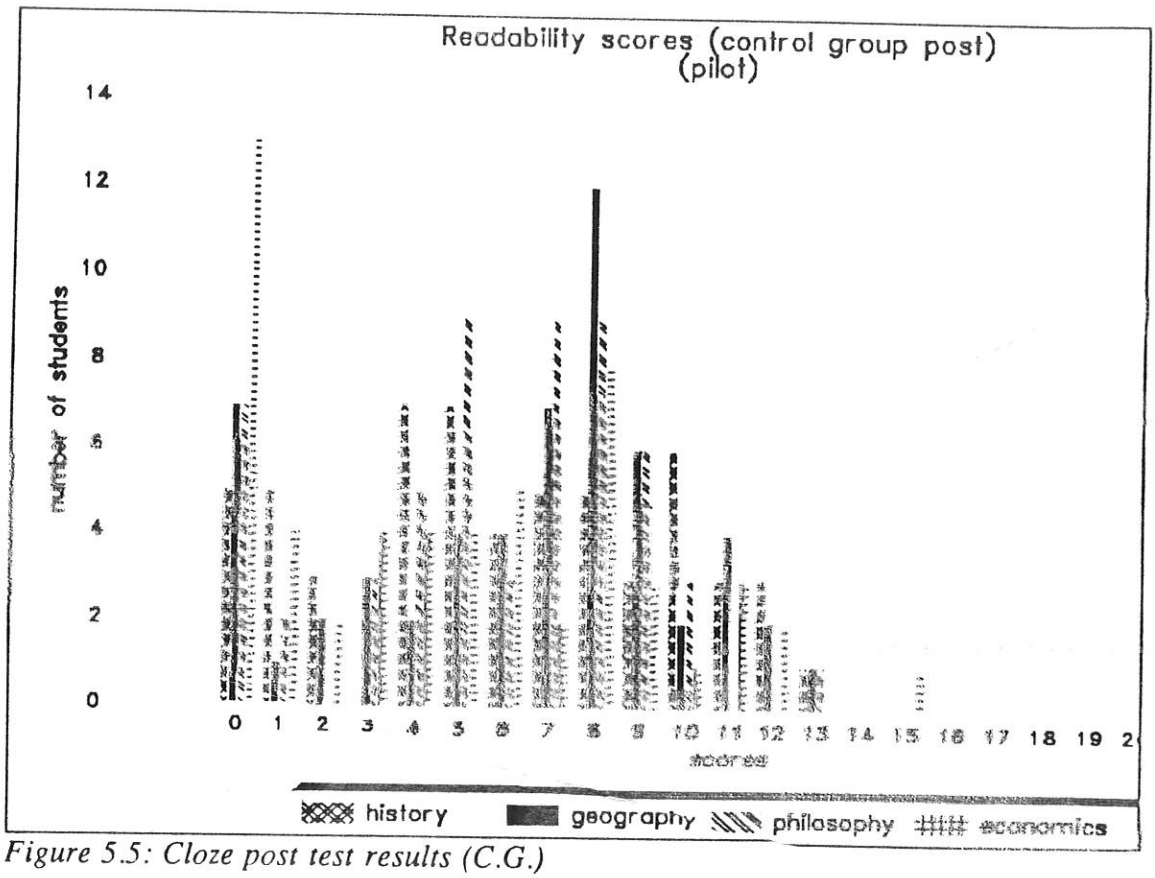

Figure 5.5: Cloze post test results (C.G.)

instructional level -include 20 per cent, 15 per cent, 8 per cent and 14 per cent for history, geography, philosophy and economics respectively.

In general terms, three possible reasons can be identified for the low performance of students in both groups in the post test. The first refers to text difficulty. It can be imagined that the texts selected for the post tests are more difficult than those for the pretests. This is, however, unlikely because if it had been so, students' scores would not have been so low uniformly across the subjects. The second possibility refers to the attitude of the students. As indicated above (section 4.2 and section 4.3 Chapter 4), students seem to be interested in those tests - such as Freshman English 101B - they think they are going to be helpful for the service English final examination. The readability tests, thus, may have been taken to have secondary importance by the students. In light of the attitudes of some teachers and students towards the study, it may not be surprising to find that the scores on cloze post tests are so low. The last, and possibly, the most significant, could be attributed to the nature of the cloze tests. It is indicated that students

have been observed to be involved in independent work and they have been working hard (specially in doing their reading assignment). There seems to be no reason why, after a semester, the learners score lower than before in the cloze tests. It cannot be justified to state that they have not learned at all. Certainly, learning has taken place. However, the cloze test seems not to be the appropriate tool for assessing such an improvement. Any way, it appears that the compiled data from the cloze test is not sufficient to indicate the progress the students have made using the recommended approach. The scores apparently indicate lower performances of both groups in the post test than in the pretest.

5.223 Tests of general English language proficiency

The third part of the test package used to assess students' general English language improvement consists of the final examination papers of both Freshman English 101A and Freshman English 101B. These papers have been selected from the collection of test papers used by the department as final examination papers in 1989 and 1990. The test papers used with the pilot study are mostly of 1989.

Students are made to take the two tests at different times because each test takes about three hours to complete. It is partly because of this that the number of students taking a particular test at a particular time is different from that of another test administered at another time. This is true both in the pilot and main study. Students not appearing for a particular test have been marked as (0) or (00) in ***Appendix 7.1*** for both the pilot and main study.

The answer sheets of the students are marked by their instructors using the usual guidelines provided by the Freshman English co-ordinator. It is important to note that Freshman English 101A and Freshman English 101B are marked out of 55 and 50 respectively. The scores of the pilot group are provided in ***Appendix 7.1***.

Group[8]	Test	number	means	standrd deviatn	standrd error	F-val	2-tail prob.	Pooled Variance Estimate			Separate Variance Estimate			remark
								t-value	Deg. of freedm	2-tail prob.	t-value	Deg. of freedm	2-tail prob.	
Study	pretest	58	39.2759	7.518	.987	1.42	.202	1.08	105	.281	1.07	94.03	.289	not signif.
Contrl	pretest	49	37.5511	8.965	1.281									
Study	posttest	48	36.2708	7.584	1.095	1.40	.251	.71	94	.478	.71	91.44	.478	not signif.
Contrl	posttest	48	35.0625	8.978	1.296									

Group	Test	number	means	standrd deviatn	standrd error	mean differ.	st.devtn differ	st.error differ.	corr.	2-tail prob.	t-value	Deg. of freedm	2-tail prob.	remark
Study	pretest	44	40.5909	6.326	.954	3.7500	5.077	.765	.72	000	4.90	43	000	signif.
Study	posttest	44	36.8409	7.107	1.071									
Contrl	pretest	43	36.8140	8.897	1.357	2.3023	6.913	1.054	.700	.000	2.18	42	.035	signif.
Contrl	posttest	43	34.5116	8.937	1.363									

Table 5.3 T-test for level of significance of means' difference for Freshman English 101A performance of both groups (pilot)

[8]The first part of the table (consisting of the first five rows) shows the *t-test* for the means' difference of the study and control groups in the pretest and post test. The items on the first row are number of students who took the test, means, standard deviations, standard errors, F-value, 2-tail prob., t-value, degrees of freedom, 2-tail prob. (the last three under pooled variance estimate), t-value, degrees of freedom, 2-tail prob. (under separate variance estimate), and lastly, remark or *level of significance*.

The second part of the table (rows 7 to 11) indicates the paired samples t-test of the means' difference of each group during the pretest and the post test. The subheadings for this part (row 7) are number of students who took the test, means, standard deviations, standard errors, means' difference, standard deviation difference, standard error difference, corr., 2-tail probability, t-value, degrees of freedom, 2-tail probability, and *level of significance*

The t-test of the means of scores of both the study and control groups on Freshman English 101A pretest (Table 5.3) reveals the following: the number of students who have taken the test are 58 and 49 (study and control respectively), the means and standard deviations of the scores are 39.2759 and 37.5511, and 7.518 and 8.965 for study and control groups respectively. Hence, the t-test indicates that there is no significant difference between the means of the two groups at p= 0.05.

Similarly, the t-test statistic for the Freshman English 101B pretest (Table 5.4) indicates that the number of students who have taken the test are 56 and 50 (study and control respectively). The means and standard deviations of the scores of the study and control groups respectively are 32.85 and 30.60, and 8.13 and 10.21. Accordingly, it is established that the difference between the two means for Freshman English 101B is not statistically significant. Consequently, it can be assumed that the study and control groups have the same level of linguistic ability at the beginning of the study.

At the end of the study, the t-test statistic for Freshman English 101A post test scores of the two groups (Table 5.3) indicates the following: number of students who took the test are 48 and 48; mean = 36.27 and 35.06; and standard deviations = 7.58 and 8.97 for the study and control groups respectively. The comparison between the t-cal. and t-tab. shows the two means are not significantly different at p = 0.05. Thus, this can be taken to mean that the two groups (study and control) despite the difference in the approaches used, have not performed significantly different from each other in the Freshman English 101A post test. Another related issue that should be established is whether the study group have performed better in the post test of Freshman English 101A than in the pretest.

The t-statistic of the pretest and post test of Freshman English 101A (Table 5.3) of the study group indicates the following: number of cases = 44, means = 40.59 and 36.84, the standard deviations = 6.32 and 7.10. It is calculated that the two means of the pretest and post test scores are significantly different at $p < 0.05$. In other words, the study group have performed significantly better in the pretest than in the post test of Freshman English 101A. Similarly, the control group have achieved lower in the post test than in the pretest

Group[9]	Test	number of stds.	means	standrd deviatn	standrd error	F-val	2-tail prob.	Pooled Variance Estimate			Separate Variance Estimate			remark
								t-value	Deg. of freedm	2-tail prob.	t-value	Deg. of freedm	2-tail prob.	
Study	pretest	56	32.8571	8.132	1.087	1.58	.101	1.26	104	.209	1.25	93.48	.215	not signif.
Contrl	pretest	50	30.6000	10.214	1.444									
Study	posttest	62	34.1613	6.453	.820	1.16	.575	-.15	114	.879	-.15	109.07	.879	not signif.
Contrl	posttest	54	34.3519	6.948	.945									
Group	Test	number of stds.	means	standrd deviatn	standrd error	mean differ.	st.devtn differ	st.error differ.	corr.	2-tail prob.	t-value	Deg. of freedm	2-tail prob.	remark
Study	pretest	56	32.8579	8.132	1.087	-2.0536	3.970	.531	.887	.000	-3.87	55	.000	signif.
Study	posttest	56	34.9107	5.925	.792									
Contrl	pretest	50	30.6000	10.214	1.444	-3.4800	6.955	.984	.733	.000	-3.54	49	.001	signif.
Contrl	posttest	50	34.0800	7.151	1.011									

Table 5.4 T-test for level of significance of means' difference for Freshman English 101B performance of both groups (pilot)

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[9]The first part of the table (consisting of the first five rows) shows the *t-test* for the means' difference of the study and control groups in the pretest and post test. The items on the first row are number of students who took the test, means, standard deviations, standard errors, F-value, 2-tail prob., t-value, degrees of freedom, 2-tail prob. (the last three under pooled variance estimate), t-value, degrees of freedom, 2-tail prob. (under separate variance estimate), and lastly, remark or *level of significance*

The second part of the table (rows 7 to 11) indicates the paired samples t-test of the means' difference of each group during the pretest and the post test. The subheadings for this part (row 7) are number of students who took the test, means, standard deviations, standard errors, means' difference, standard deviation difference, standard error difference, corr., 2-tail probability, t-value, degrees of freedom, 2-tail probability, and *level of significance*

of Freshman English 101A, that is, the means for the pretest and post test of the control group (43 cases), 36.8 and 34.5 (standard deviation 8.89 and 8.93) are significantly different at $p < 0.05$. The same question raised about the cloze tests can be asked about the Freshman English 101A test papers. The assumption that the two versions of the Freshman English 101A examination paper have the same level of difficulty seems to be unwarranted. It is to be recalled that the groups in the pilot study have studied Freshman English 101A for one semester and passed the final examination for the course. It seems that another variable is affecting the performance of the students at the end of the second semester. This could be the students' attitude towards the importance of working on a Freshman English 101A examination in the second semester (see section 4.1 Chapter 4). It might also be doubted whether it is appropriate for testing independent work. However, such speculations have to be corroborated by the results of the students in the main study discussed below (section 5.323).

The performance scores of the study and control groups on Freshman English 101B post test (Table 5.4) are as follows: number of students who took the test = 62 and 54, means are 34.16 and 34.35 and standard deviation 6.45 and 6.948 for the study and control groups respectively. The difference between the two means is calculated to be insignificant at $p = 0.05$. However, the t-test for the pretest and post test scores of the study group depicts the following: number of cases = 56, means are 32.857 and 34.911, standard deviation = 8.13 and 5.93. It is established that the two means are significantly different at $p = 0.00$. Similarly, the scores of the control group in the pretest and post tests of Freshman English 101B indicate these facts: number of cases are 50, means = 30.60 and 34.08, standard deviation 10.21 and 7.15. The paired samples t-test confirms that the two means are significantly different at $p = 0.001$. In other words, the control group, like the study group, have performed better in the post test than in the pretest of the Freshman English 101B. Thus, the higher performance of the study group in the post test of the Freshman English 101B cannot be totally attributed to the effectiveness of the approach pursued. However, the scores indicate that both groups have shown significant improvement in Freshman English 101B. The significant variable operating, in light of the results in the other test, seems to be the attitude of the students or the degree of relevance they attribute to these tests. Freshman English 101B is the course which the

students are expecting to sit an examination for at the end of the second semester (also at the planned end of the pilot study). Hence, students might have taken the Freshman English 101B tests quite seriously. Of course, this does not justify fully for the effectiveness of the approach used since, it appears, both groups have similar scores in the post test, and their difference not statistically significant. As shown in Table 5.4, it is only in the Freshman English 101B test that a significant difference in performance between the pretest and the post test is indicated. One can safely claim that the students in both groups have seen the relevance of taking this particular test more seriously than any other test.

5.3 The main study

The main study is basically a replication of the pilot study in an extensive form but with the following basic differences (for the reasons discussed in section 4.3 Chapter 4). The following are some of the major differences that should be considered.

The first main difference is the size of the sample of students involved in the study. While in the pilot the size of the study group never exceeded 62 students, in the main study there were about 210 students. As has been indicated above, section 4.21 Chapter 4, the pilot study was originally planned to involve about 180 students (both in study and control) in six sections. And, it was also planned that the sections were to be re-grouped in study-control pairs. The major objective in such grouping was to find out and statistically establish that the suggested approach could be the cause for any inter-group differences in both reading and linguistic performance. The emphasis was on the observation of small groups. The main study focused on the study of the general improvement in reading behaviour of a large group that is more representative of the target population. Out of the total twenty one sections, thirteen sections (about 420 students) were involved. Six sections were assigned to form the study group.

The second difference lies on the number of instructors involved. The main study involved several instructors - there were six instructors teaching in the study groups. Two of the six instructors teaching the study groups had a study-control pair each. Despite the fact that the instructor variable is acknowledged as significantly important in the current study (see section 4.2 and section 4.3 Chapter 4 above) in handling the mode of study of the individualised reading in English for academic purposes, no attempt has been made to control it for reasons beyond the scope of the study.

The third difference is based on the nature of the materials. It is pointed out that the pilot used the ***ELSIP*** materials and the corpus used the ***SRA*** reading cards. While there was no apparent structuring in the ***ELSIP*** materials except for their

being graded, the *SRA* provided most of the learners used to structured learning with some sort of scaffolding through the various exercises. This seems to have given the students a sense of direction and to have positively enhanced their sense of achievement (see section 5.3111 below for learners' attitudes towards the *SRA* materials). In fact, the attitudes of the students towards both types of reading materials are relatively positive.

Finally, in the reading laboratory, the options for learning to read were rather more limited during the pilot study than the main study. In other words, during the pilot study, students selected or were helped to select a reading material from the ***ELSIP*** collection *appropriate* to their reading level and *read* (section 4.342 Chapter 4). When they finished reading what they selected, they picked another. Though the fundamental basis of the approach is to allow learners to manage their learning activities (section 3.3 Chapter 3), and, thus, by implication, to trust the students that they know *what* they are doing and *why* they are doing it, in the absence of any sort of 'checking' mechanism (such as looking at students' performance on reading comprehension exercises, which the ***ELSIP*** did not contain), during the pilot study, it was difficult to find out whether students were 'doing' their assignment or not. The weekly report sheet that students were supposed to submit (see Table 4.5 Chapter 4) was not enough to indicate exactly whether they read with an adequate level of comprehension or not. During the main study, students were engaged in, besides reading intensively and extensively, various learning activities appropriate to each individual learner's needs and wants such as doing more exercises on reading comprehension, vocabulary building or reading speed (see section 5.311 below). They were not made to follow rigidly what the ***SRA*** proposed, although most students preferred to work through the learning activities suggested in the ***SRA*** materials. It was envisaged that such activities would enhance learning awareness and encourage learner autonomy in developing effective learning strategies for academic reading in English. As it has been pointed out in section 3.2221 Chapter 3, the ***SRA*** materials are not taken as an end by themselves, that is, learning success is to be viewed not only from the students' level of acquiring what these materials may consist of but also from the

point of view of their ability to use these materials to experiment their reading styles and strategies with and to operate efficiently in an independent mode of learning. The later is given more prominence than the former in individualized learning (Dickinson 1987).

5.31 Students' awareness of the reading process

5.311 Students' reports of their experiences of the 'programme'

At the end of the study, that is, at the end of the first semester of 1990-91 academic year, the students involved in the study were given two open-ended questions attached to the metacognitive questionnaire mentioned in section 4.331 and section 4.331 Chapter 4. These questions were mainly intended to find out students' reactions to the nature and mode of the programme they were exposed to for one semester. They were also asked to make any recommendations they might have to improve the programme. More specifically, the questions were intended to find out the opinions of the students regarding the appropriacy of the reading materials, the advantages they felt they got from the programme, and whether the time allocation for silent reading *vis-a-vis* the discussion was acceptable or not. The reports (***Appendix 3.12***) compiled can be taken to fall under the categories discussed below.

5.3111 The materials used

As indicated above, the students could only use the ***SRA*** reading packages. If it had been possible to carry on with the study during the second semester of the same academic year, most students would have worked with the ***ELSIP*** as planned. Hence, since this was not possible, the information compiled here is mainly on the ***SRA 3a*** (revised edition) reading materials.

Out of the 210 students involved in the corpus study group, about 29 students have not responded to the item on materials in the questionnaire (section 4.331 Chapter 4). 168 (80 per cent) students seem to like the materials and they report that they have gained a

lot from the reading cards. One aspect mentioned by the students is that "the passages are interesting and the way they ask questions" is impressive (***str. 3.1215 Appendix 3.12***). Another is that the "SQ3R points in the booklet helped me how I can get the overall meaning of the text and I can concentrate on the details of the content" (***str. 3.1269 Appendix 3.12***). While the great majority find the reading cards easy to use and claim to have got a lot of advantage out of them, some (13 students or 6 per cent) report that they have not found the materials helpful. At least three factors could be identified from the students reports as possible reasons. The first is, as mentioned above, content unfamiliarity. One student states that

> if it is possible the reading materials content needs some arrangements; that means the passage part is not related to our daily life, the culture, history or other activities which we can face in our daily life (***str. 3.1269a Appendix 3.12***).

Another student reports that "...since most of us do not have good background in English in our high school study, it is sometimes difficult to understand foreign compositions (stories written by foreigners). So it is good for those of us who have faced the same problem as I do to have a domestic composition" (***str.3.1269a, Appendix 3.12***). The second point, possibly not shared by many students, is the monotony in the style of the reading exercises. As pointed out above (section 3.2221 Chapter 3) a student reports that "most of the questions are related, that is, the types of the questions in the cards are the same and we use the same method always, which will make this programme a little bit boring sometimes" (***str. 3.1258 Appendix 3.12***). The last point is, despite the reports of the majority of the students (***Appendix 3.12***) that they have found the materials and the approach of the programme relevant to the learning of both the current service English course, that is, Freshman English 101A, and their other academic courses, some students state their fear that the Freshman English course is neglected. As one student indicates, while admitting that he/she has gained a lot from the programme,

> but why I want to leave for the next semester ... is that when I learn here in the laboratory the normal class, i.e., the Freshman English course is retarded and I fear the exam comprises mostly from that book and that book which is prepared for Freshman English course needs an assistant and takes time. I supposed that I lagged behind the other students in that case (***str. 3.12166 Appendix 3.12***).

Apparently all students agree that the programme is aimed at developing general background knowledge, but some could not see the connection between this and the major objective of the service English course. One student asks this very question by stating that "I think most of the students, including myself, do not understand the real purpose of the programme. Then if it is declared the purpose of the programme to the students, we may take the programme seriously" (***str. 3.1266a Appendix 3.12***).

5.3112 The approach

As indicated above (section 3.2221 Chapter 3) the fundamental aim of the approach is to ensure learner involvement and facilitate independent learning and to study the feasibility and effectiveness of individualized reading in promoting fluent EFL reading. Less emphasis is given to the content of the materials provided, since it is assumed that in ideal conditions learners should be able to make their own selections of materials.

Two seemingly conflicting points can be derived from the compiled data. One refers to the confidence the reading programme has generated in the students; the other refers to the opposite of it - the apprehension it has created in some students that they may fail in Freshman English examination because they are not being taught in a similar way as the students in the control group and they are not using the official Freshman English text book[10]. Out of the 210 students, 181 students (86 per cent) report that they enjoyed the programme. 153 (73 per cent) state that this approach has helped them to learn Freshman English and 137 (6. per cent) feel that it has also helped them to learn their other subjects. It is indicated in Table 5.5 below that about 52 per cent (109) of the students would like to see the programme continue in the second semester with almost similar time arrangement. However, the same number of students suggest changes in the ratio of time allotted to reading lab work and group discussion. It seems that students respond to all questions as separate items and not as related to each other. In other words, a student who opts for more time for reading in the lab on the first item, may also state that more

[10]However, this has been proved to be untrue (see section 5.323 below).

item	no response number/ %	agreed number/ %	disagree number/ %
enjoyed reading programme	27/ 12.9%	181/ 86.2%	2/ 1.0%
liked materials used in lab	29/ 13.8%	168/ 80%	13/ 6.2%
help (in Freshman English)	28/ 13.3%	153/ 72.9%	29/ 13.8%
help (in other courses)	31/ 14.8%	137/ 65.2%	42/ 20%
time (more to reading in lab)	30/ 14.3%	109/ 51.9%	71/ 33.8%
time (more to discussion)	31/ 14.8%	109/ 51.9%	70/ 33.3%
same arrangement for 2_{nd} sem	31/ 14.8%	109/ 51.9%	70/ 33.3%

Table 5.5: Student reactions to the programme of the main study

time should be allotted to discussion work. This may be taken as a possible constraint in the responses to the questionnaire.

Most students state that they have improved in their reading skill, speed, vocabulary, and in their methods of tackling comprehension questions (for instance, see reports by ***str. 3.127, str. 3.129a, str. 3.1211, str. 3. 1213, str. 3.1241, str. 3.1276, str. 3.1288a, str. 3.1290, Appendix 3.12***). One student states that "the programme has helped me examine my ability and correct my weak parts [points?] especially it has helped me to improve my reading speed and comprehension. I have also added a lot of words to my stock of vocabulary" (***str. 3.1233***). Some report that they have assumed positive attitudinal change towards reading (***str. 3.1233, str. 3.1247, Appendix 3.12***, for example). For instance, one student expresses this as follows:

> I get many advantage from the programme. Before this reading comprehension programme, I did not like reading comprehension specially in the exams of my previous classes and I did the comprehension questions by guessing but now I am interested to read any English comprehension and text books and in addition I improved my reading speed (***str. 3.1211, Appendix 3.12***).

A similar idea is expressed in the following:

> Since I have read many different cards based on different ideas, now I am

> interested in reading many books written in English on different topics. Before I started this lab work I did not want so much to read history books, literature written in English but after this work I am interested (***str. 3.1279, Appendix 3.12***).

Similarly one student claims that "the mere [*sic*] exposure to successive passage reading comprehension has reduced the uncomfortable feelings that I used to have during comprehension work in actual exams" (***str. 3.1285, Appendix 3.12***). Another student explicitly states that "even if this programme has been conducted for a short period of time I have gained the following advantages: 1) I have improved my speed of reading and doing comprehension questions 2) I have learnt many new words (and) 3) it also helps me in improving my writing" (***str. 3.1269b, Appendix 3.12***). One student mentions that

> the program was unique by its nature. I did it with full confidence and freedom. I improved my reading. I came to analyze how to guess at word meanings without referring to the dictionary. Although no such freedom on examinations ... (***str. 3.1275, Appendix 3.12***).

A number of the students involved, as it has been indicated above, express their apprehension regarding the fact that they are not properly being trained for the service English examination (for instance, ***str. 3.1216b, str. 3.1221a, str. 3.1226, str. 3.1227, str. 3.1282, Appendix 3.12***). One student states that "the advantage I got from the programme is that I know new words but I have not studied the Freshman [English] text book" (***str. 3.1284, Appendix 3.12***). Of course, this is an anticipated reaction because, as has been indicated above, there is a basic difference in the approach between the service English courses and the current study. Remarks like "... please change the programme of learn with teacher help" (***str. 3.1267, Appendix 3.12***) and "the discussion programme ... has to be changed in such a way that we can cover the text as early as possible..." (***str. 3.1262a, Appendix 3.12***) seem to indicate that either some learners do not want to take the risk to learn with less teacher dependence or the teachers concerned have not been able to encourage independent learning through learner training. Below is given a survey of students' attitudes towards and their knowledge of the reading process and reading strategies.

5.3113 The reading process and common reading strategies

Students, particularly those in the study groups, have indicated their conceptions of the reading process and the common reading strategies they employ to read a text before the study started and after it ended. As mentioned above in section 4.2 and section 4.3 Chapter 4, their choices are indicated on a metacognitive questionnaire based on the likert scale. The information compiled consists of the number of students who have *not* responded to a particular item for various reasons (marked as 0), who have *strongly agreed* (marked as 1), *agreed* (marked as 2) to a given statement, who feel they don't have any idea about the given statement (marked as 3), those who prefer to *disagree* (marked as 4) or *strongly disagree* (marked as 5) to a given statement.

The data compiled from a questionnaire administered before the beginning of the study programme (Table 5 : below) shows the number and percentage of the students agreeing and/or disagreeing to statements about the ability to read in their mother tongue, in Amharic and in English on the one hand, and their common purpose for reading in these languages. Out of the 420 students, an average of about 4 per cent (or 16 to 20) of the students have not responded to these items. While 48 per cent[11] (203 students) and 53 per cent (224 students) strongly agree with the statement that they are able to read effectively in their mother tongue and in Amharic respectively, about 57 per cent (241) think that they have no problem in reading in English. Only 2 students out of the 420 students doubt about their ability to read in English. A similar number of students claim that their common purpose in reading is for study and entertainment (37 per cent and 36 per cent, or 156 and 154 students respectively).

[11]It is necessary to note that when figures for two levels of agreement, such as *strongly agree* and *agree*, or two levels of disagreement, such as *disagree* and *strongly disagree*, are reported in percentage, the two percentages are added and divided by two to yield a figure out of 100. However, for the sake of convenience, in most cases, the figures for *agree* and *disagree* are reported as these seem to be more prominent than the rest. The actual figures and percentages are indicated in Table 5.6.

Group	All students (study and control)[12]					Students in the study groups (pre and post study)						
Time	at the beginning of the study					at the beginning of the study					end of study	
Catgr [13]	ability in reading in			purpose		ability in reading in			purpose		purpose	
Item	L1	Amh.	Eng.	study	enjoy	L1	Amh.	Eng.	study	enjoy	study	enjoy
0	26/6.2	21/5	16/3.8	16/3.8	23/5.5	20/9.5	12/5.7	12/5.7	13/6.2	12/5.7	29/14	36/7
1	203/48	224/53	71/17	141/34	108/26	101/48	112/53	36/17	71/34	53/25	88/42	43/21
2	130/31	145/35	241/57	171/41	200/48	63/30	70/33	116/55	84/40	99/47	72/34	87/41
3	30/7	18/4	76/18	22/5	44/11	16/7.6	10/4.8	37/18	10/4.8	22/11	11/5	28/13
4	22/5	9/2	14/3	53/13	34/8	6/2.9	4/1.9	8/3.8	23/11	19/9	10/4.8	12/5.7
5	9/2	3/.7	2/.5	17/4	11/2.6	4/1.9	2/1	1/.5	9/4.3	5/2.4	nil	4/1.9
Total	420/100 (number of students/percentage)					210/100 (number of students/percentage)						

Table 5.6 Students' responses to items on ability and purpose of reading (pre- and post-study)

[12]As indicated in the bottom row of the table, the total number of students is 420 - 210 in the study group, and 210 in the control group.

[13]catgr = a group's name for items in the questionnaire; (first column): 0 = *no response*, 1 = *strongly agree*, 2 = *agree*, 3 = *no idea*, 4 = *disagree*, and 5 = *strongly disagree*; (fourth row): item = a question in the category mentioned at the top row, L1 = *first language*, or *mother tongue*, Amh. = *Amharic*, Eng. = *English*.

Two points may be derived from the responses: firstly, if students are able to read as much as they claim they do in their L1, one wonders why current research confirms the reverse - that students do not read as much as they are expected, and they are relatively poor in reading in English for academic purposes (see section 2.6 Chapter 2). More significantly, some researchers claim that good L1 readers are likely to be good readers in L2 (Cziko 1980). It is possible to assume that students are not telling the truth or they do not know what level of reading ability is required of them. For instance, students informally confirm that they did not have any sort of reading assignment to be done or they had not read any newspaper or brochure written in English before they joined the university (some of the written responses of the students both in the pilot and corpus imply this). Secondly, the similar figures for apparently dissimilar items may be due to the fact that students have taken these items as mutually exclusive, that is, for instance, for the question item *purpose of reading*, students may take *study* as an independent variable (item) and respond to it in relation not to the next item, *entertainment*, but possibly to how much of their time they spend to reading in general. It is essential to note that the figures in the tables should also be interpreted from this angle. There is a difference between these two aspects.

Table 5.6 above also includes information about the responses of the study group before and at the end of the programme to the two aspects of reading mentioned, that is, reading ability in L1, Amharic and English, and the purpose of reading. In the post test, the item on ability to read is not considered. Like the responses of the whole group (420 students), the responses of the study group at the beginning of the study indicate that about 48 per cent (101) and 53 per cent (112) respectively of the students strongly agree with the statements that they are able to read in their mother tongue and in Amharic. Only 17 per cent (36 students out of the 210 students) strongly claim that they are fluent readers in English. 55 per cent (116) agree that they can read in English. Similarly, about 77 and 76 students or about 37 per cent and 36 per cent respectively agree that they read for study and entertainment. Apparently, the students' responses after the end of the study regarding reading purpose are more or less similar to the responses given at the beginning of the study. While about 16 (7 per cent) students disagree with the statement that their purpose for reading is mainly for study, at the beginning of the study, an insignificant

Category [14]	Confidence in one's ability to ...						repair strategies in reading					
item	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)
0	18/4.3	14/3.3	19/4.5	20/4.8	15/3.6	20/4.8	16/3.8	18/4.3	17/4	15/3.6	16/3.8	17/4
1	77/18	156/37	101/24	104/25	168/40	123/29	138/33	104/24.8	175/41.7	185/44	13/3.1	19/4.5
2	223/53	210/50	224/53	210/50	206/49	180/43	190/45	197/47	175/41.7	182/43.3	21/5	57/13.6
3	71/17	31/7	62/15	64/15	17/4	64/15	29/6.9	50/12	30/7.1	24/5.7	25/6	37/8.8
4	27/6	9/2	14/3.3	19/4.5	11/2.6	21/5	34/8.1	45/10.7	18/4.3	9/2.1	138/32.9	182/43.3
5	4/1	none	none	3/0.7	3/0.7	12/2.9	13/3.1	6/1.4	5/1.2	5/1.2	207/49.3	107/25.5
total	420/100 per cent (number of students/percentage)						420/100 per cent (number of students/percentage)					

Table 5.7a Responses of social science freshman students to the questionnaire on reading before the study (categories 1 and 2)

[14]In ***Table 5.7a***, the responses of students to the two categories in the questionnaire are submitted. In the first column, **0** = *no response*, **1** = *strong agreement*, **2** = *agreement*, **3** = *no idea*, **4** = *disagreement*, and **5** = *strong disagreement*. In the first row, the category's name is given. The second row indicates the items given in letters: accordingly, in the category of *confidence in one's ability to ...* **(a)** *anticipate what will come next in the text*, **(b)** *recognize the difference between main points and supporting details*, **(c)** *relate information which comes next in the text to previous information in the text*, **(d)** *question the significance or truthfulness of what the author says*, **(e)** *use prior knowledge and experience to understand the content of the text*, **(f)** *say when something is understood or not*; in the second category, *repair strategies in reading*, **(a)** *keep on reading and hope for clarification later on*, **(b)** *read the problematic part*, **(c)** *go back to a point before the problematic part and reread starting from there*, **(d)** *look up unknown words in a dictionary*, **(e)** *give up and stop reading* (an avoidance rather than a repair strategy), **(f)** *ask for help from teachers*.

ctgr	strategies of effective reading[15]									sources of reading difficulty										
item	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)	(j)	(k)
0	30/7	16/4	16/4	19/5	14/3	16/4	17/4	17/4	17/4	14/3	15/4	18/4	15/4	19/5	16/4	15/4	18/4	15/4	20/5	32/8
1	69/ 16	101/ 24	166/ 39.5	52/ 12.4	100/ 23.8	143/ 34	80/ 19	128/ 30.5	72/ 17.1	39/ 9.3	53/ 12.6	70/ 16.7	43/ 10	20/ 4.8	39/ 9.3	76/ 18.1	40/ 9.5	94/ 22.4	83/ 19.8	34/ 8
2	182/ 43.3	197/ 46.9	171/ 40.7	178/ 42.4	226/ 53.8	213/ 50.7	209/ 49.8	186/ 44.3	201/ 47.9	140/ 33.3	139/ 33.1	211/ 50.2	179/ 43	73/ 17.4	155/ 36.9	165/ 39.3	166/ 39.5	168/ 40	172/ 41	190/ 45
3	70/ 1[illegible]	53/ 12.6	40/ 9.5	94/ 22.4	56/ 13.3	33/ 7.9	69/ 16.4	56/ 13.3	100/ 2[illegible]	66/ 15.7	75/ 18	53/ 12.6	71/ 17	55/ 13	66/ 15.7	54/ 12.9	98/ 2[illegible]	40/ 9.5	65/ 15.5	107/ 25.5
4	52/ 12	47/ 11	24/ 5.7	68/ 16.2	21/ 5	12 2.9	38/ 9	31/ 7.4	26/ 6.2	127/ 30.2	121/ 29	58/ 13.8	96/ 23	158/ 37.6	112/ 26.7	92/ 21.9	80/ 19	85/ 20.2	65/ 15.5	43/ 10.2
5	17/4	6/1.4	3/0.7	9/2.1	3/0.7	3/0.7	7/1.7	2/0.5	4/1	34/8	17/4	10/2	16/4	95/ 23	32/ 7.6	18/ 4.3	18/ 4.3	18/ 4.3	15/ 3.6	14/ 3.[illegible]
ttl.	420/100 per cent (number of students/percentage)									420/100 per cent (number of students/percentage)										

Table 5.7b. Responses of social science freshman students to the questionnaire on reading before the study (category 3 and category 4)

[15]***Table 5.7b*** is a continuation of ***Table 5.7a***. As in ***Table 5.7a***, ***Table 5.7b*** shows students' responses to two other categories in the questionnaire. These are *strategies of effective reading* and *sources of reading difficulty*. In each category, the items included are shown in letters. The first category includes (a) *mentally sounding out parts of words*, (b) *understanding the meaning of each word*, (c) *getting the overall meaning of the text*, (d) *pronouncing each whole word*, (e) *focusing on grammar*, (f) *relating the text to prior knowledge*, (g) *looking up words in the dictionary*, (h) *concentrating on the details of the content*, and (i) *focusing on the organization of the text*. The second category, *sources of reading difficulty*, consists of (a) *sounds of words*, (b) *pronunciation of words*, (c) *recognizing words*, (d) *syntax*, (e) *alphabet*, (f) *relating text to prior knowledge*, (g) *getting the overall meaning*, (h) *organization of the text*, (i) *summarizing*, (j) *skimming and scanning*, and (k) *transcoding information*. As in ***Table 5.7a***, the first column shows the levels of agreement or disagreement to the items in the second row. 0 = *no response*, 1 = *strong agreement*, 2 = *agreement*, 3 = *no idea*, 4 = *disagreement*, and 5 = *strong disagreement*.

Category[16]	reading strategies associated with the best reader								learning strategies for fluent reading				
item	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
0	15/3.6	20/5	15/4	16/3.8	15/3.6	15/3.6	17/4	18/4.3	17/4	16/3.8	16/3.8	16/3.8	18/4.3
1	160/38	93/22	223/53	73/17	102/24	156/37	145/35	149/36	153/36	141/34	150/36	130/31	168/40
2	200/48	184/44	132/31	148/35	163/39	183/44	205/49	202/48	204/49	200/48	182/43	159/38	166/40
3	29/7	49/12	30/7	87/21	64/15.2	50/12	31/7.4	42/10	32/7.6	46/11	38/9	52/12	36/8.6
4	13/3	61/15	16/4	85/20	58/14	12/3	21/5	5/1.2	14/3.3	14/3.3	30/7	53/12.6	25/6
5	3/.7	13/3	4/1	11/2.6	18/4.3	4/1	1/0.2	4/1	nil	3/0.7	4/1	10/2.4	7/1.7
total	420/100 per cent (number of students/percentage)								420/100 per cent (number of students/percentage)				

Table 5.7c Responses of social science freshman students to the questionnaire on reading before the study (category 5 and category 6)

[16]*Table 5.7c* shows the last two categories mentioned in the first row: *reading strategies associated with fluent reader* and *learning approaches to fluent reading*. The former consists the following items represented in letters in the table: (a) *recognizing words*, (b) *sounding out words*, (c) *understanding the overall meaning of a text*, (d) *using a dictionary*, (e) *guessing at word meanings*, (f) *integrating information*, (g) *focusing on details of content*, and (h) *grasping the organization of the text*. The latter includes (a) *learning words*, (b) *improving pronunciation*, (c) *individualization of instruction*, (d) *autonomy or taking responsibility for one's learning to read*, and (e) *teacher-directed learning*. The first column indicates levels of agreement or disagreement: 0 = *no response*, 1 = *strong agreement*, 2 = *agreement*, 3 = *no idea*, 4 = *disagreement*, and 5 = *strong disagreement*.

number of students (5 students or 2.5 per cent) hold the same view at the end of the study. Similarly, 12 students (or 5.5 per cent) disagree with the statement that the purpose of reading is mainly for entertainment at the beginning of the study, and only 8 students (or 3.5 per cent) report the same view at the end of the study. How significant this difference is can only be visualized by relating it to the views expressed by the students, at the end of the study, discussed in detail above.

The major part of the questionnaire as specified in Table 4.3 Chapter 4 above (***Appendix 2.2***) consists of the following major subgroups: confidence in one's ability to employ appropriate reading strategies, strategies of effective reading, sources of reading difficulty, qualities of fluent reading and preferred approaches to learning to read effectively. In the questionnaire administered at the beginning of the main study, there are six, six, nine, eleven, eight and five items respectively for the above subgroups (see Table 5.6 above). As mentioned elsewhere, the rationale for administering the questionnaire is to find out student conceptions about the reading process and strategies and to examine if these change after the end of the study. The items consist of both bottom up and top down views of the reading process.

Table 5.7 (a), (b), and (c) above is a summary of the results of the questionnaire administered at the beginning of the study. The majority of the students indicate (Table 5.7a) that they are confident in their ability to (a) anticipate what will come next in a given text - 53 per cent (223), (b) recognize the difference between main points and supporting details - 50 per cent (210), (c) relate information which comes next in the text to previous information in the text - 53 per cent (224), (d) question the significance or truthfulness of what the author says - 50 per cent (210), (e) use prior knowledge and experience to understand the content of the text - 49 per cent (206), and (f) say when something read is understood or not - 43 per cent (180). In fact if the numbers of those who strongly agree to these statements are included the percentages may be higher. It is important to note that 17 per cent (71), 15 per cent (62), 15 per cent (64) and 15 per cent (64) of the students indicate that they are not sure of their ability for items (a), (c), (d), and (f). In sum, the majority of the students report that they are able *to anticipate what will come next in a given text*, and *to relate information within a text.*

Regarding the *repair strategies* (Table 5.7a), 45 per cent (190), 47 per cent (197), 42 per cent (175), 43 per cent (182), 5 per cent (21), and 14 per cent (57) of the students imply that when they do not understand something they (a) keep on reading and hope for clarification further on, (b) read the problematic part, (c) go back to a point before the problematic part and reread starting from there, (d) look up unknown words in a dictionary, (e) give up and stop reading, and (f) ask for help from teachers respectively. The majority of the students disagree with items (e) (about 41 per cent or 172 students) and (f) (about 34 per cent or 144 students) as effective reading repair strategies. Apparently, most students select *reading the problematic part* as an effective repair strategy, and most of them strongly disagree with '*give up and stop reading*' as a repair strategy.

The strategies of *effective reading* (Table 5.7b) include (a) mentally sounding out parts of words (while about 30 per cent or 125 agree with the statement, 17 per cent or 70 doubt this), (b) understanding the meaning of each word (about 35 per cent or 168 agree, and 11 per cent or 47 disagree), (c) getting the overall meaning of the text (about 40 per cent or 168 agree and only 10 per cent or 40 students doubt this as an effective strategy), (d) ability to pronounce each word (while 42 per cent or 178 say yes, 22 per cent or 94 doubt, and 16 per cent or 68 - the maximum in the entire subgroup - disagree with it), (e) focusing on grammar (about 54 per cent or 226 say yes, while 13 per cent or 56 doubt its effectiveness), (f) relating the text to prior knowledge (about 51 per cent or 213 agree, while only 3 per cent or 12 disagree), (g) looking up words in the dictionary (about 50 per cent or 209 say yes, 16 per cent or 69 doubt it), (h) concentrating on the details of the content (while 44 per cent or 186 express their consent, 16 per cent or 69 are not sure about its effectiveness), and (i) focusing on the organization of the text (about 48 per cent or 201 say *yes* but about 24 per cent or 100 doubt the effectiveness of this strategy). To sum up, the most preferred strategies for effective reading are items *relating the text to prior knowledge*, *getting the overall meaning of the text*, and *focusing on grammar* (in that order), and the least preferred ones are *ability to pronounce each whole word*, and *mentally sounding out parts of words*.

As mentioned above, the questionnaire consists of 11 items considered as *sources of*

reading difficulty (Table 5.7b). These are (a) sounds of words, (b) pronunciation of words, (c) recognizing words, (d) syntax, (e) alphabet, (f) relating text to prior knowledge, (g) getting overall meaning, (h) textual organization, (i) summarizing, (j) skimming and scanning, and (k) transcoding information. Items (c) (50 per cent or 211), (i) (40 per cent or 168), and (k) (45 per cent or 190) are considered to be the most important sources of reading difficulty, while items (e) (17 per cent or 73), (b) (33 per cent or 139) and (a) (33 per cent or 139) are taken as less important sources of difficulty in reading. 23 per cent (or 95) and 7.6 per cent (or 32) of the students strongly disagree with items (e) (the highest in the subgroup) and (f) respectively. Moreover, 23 per cent (or 98) and 26 per cent (or 107) of the students (the highest in this subgroup) doubt whether items (h) and (k) are sources of reading difficulty or not. Thus, most students consider '*recognizing words*' as the source of reading difficulty, and '*the alphabet*' as the least factor to cause any reading problem.

The next subgroup consists of a list of strategies that may be taken as the characteristics of a successful reader (Table 5.7c). The strategies include (a) recognizing words, (b) sounding out words, (c) understanding the overall meaning of a text, (d) using a dictionary, (e) guessing at word meanings, (f) integrating information, (g) focusing on details of content, and (h) grasping the organization of the text. While 15 per cent (or 64), 12 per cent (or 49) and 12 per cent (or 50) of the students doubt whether or not items (e), (b) and (f) respectively can be considered as reading strategies associated with fluent reading, 20 per cent (or 85), 15 per cent (or 61) and 14 per cent (or 58) of the students disagree that items (d), (b) and (e) can be associated with fluent reading. On the other hand, 48 per cent (or 200), 31 per cent (or 132), 49 per cent (or 205), 48 per cent (or 202) of the students consider that items (a), (c), (g) and (h) respectively are the reading strategies employed by fluent readers. Briefly, most students feel that the successful reader *recognizes words, understands the overall meaning of a text, focuses on details of content while reading*, and has the grasp of *the organization of the text.* Some students (20 per cent) feel that '*using a dictionary*' is not one of the qualities of the best reader.

The last subgroup in the questionnaire (Table 5.7c) requires the students to identify their preferred learning strategies for developing their reading ability in English. It consists of

Catgry	**confidence in one's ability to ...**[17]						**repair strategies in reading**					
item	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)
0	15/7	12/5.7	15/7.1	14/6.7	12/5.7	15/7.1	12/5.7	12/5.7	13/6.2	12/5.7	13/6.2	15/7.1
1	40/19	69/32.9	52/24.8	50/23.8	85/40.5	61/29	71/33.8	50/23.8	88/41.9	96/45.7	6/2.9	11/5.3
2	105/50	107/51	107/51	95/45.2	98/46.7	92/43.8	90/42.9	94/44.8	79/37.6	77/36.7	9/4.3	28/13.3
3	32/15	18/8.6	29/13.8	36/17	5/2.4	26/12.4	15/7.1	25/11.9	17/8.1	19/9	12/5.7	15/7.1
4	16/7.6	4/1.9	7/3.3	14/6.7	7/3.3	9/4.3	14/6.7	23/11	11/5.2	3/1.4	65/31	97/46.2
5	2/1	none	none	1/0.5	3/1.4	7/3.3	8/3.8	6/2.9	2/1	3/1.4	105/50	44/21
total	210/100 per cent (number of students/percentage)						210/100 per cent (number of students/percentage)					

Table 5.8a Responses of the study group before the start of the main study (categories 1 and 2)

[17]The first row in ***Table 5.8a*** shows the first two categories (written as catgry) in the questionnaire. The first category, *confidence in one's ability to ...*, includes (in the second row) (a) *anticipate what will come next in a text*, (b) *recognize the difference between main points and supporting details*, (c) *relate information which comes next in the text to previous information in the text*, (d) *question the significance or truthfulness of what the author says*, (e) *use prior knowledge and experience to understand the content of the text*, and (f) *say when something read is understood or not*. The second category, *repair strategies in reading*, consists of (a) *keep on reading and hope for clarification further on*, (b) *read the problematic part*, (c) *go back to a point before the problematic part and reread starting from there*, (d) *look up unknown words*, (e) *give up and stop reading*, and (f) *ask for help from teachers*. The numbers in the first column indicate **0** = *no response*, **1** = *strong agreement*, **2** = *agreement*, **3** = *no idea*, **4** = *disagreement*, and **5** = *strong disagreement*.

Cr	strategies of effective reading[18]									sources of reading difficulty										
itm	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)	(j)	(k)
0	19/ 9	12/ 6	13/ 6	14/ 7	12/ 6	13/ 6	12/ 6	12/ 6	12/ 6	12/ 6	12/ 6	12/ 6	12/ 6	14/ 7	12/ 6	12/ 6	13/ 6	12/ 6	15/ 7	22/ 11
1	32/ 15	54/ 26	87/ 41	27/ 13	47/ 22	63/ 30	38/ 18	64/ 31	33/ 16	21/ 10	27/ 13	31/ 15	22/ 11	11/ 5.2	17/ 8	35/ 17	18/ 8.6	45/ 21	46/ 22	22/ 11
2	90/ 43	90/ 43	86/ 41	86/ 41	114 /54	111 /53	108 /51	88/ 42	97/ 46	67/ 32	73/ 35	110 /52	86/ 41	35/ 17	88/ 42	84/ 40	85/ 41	84/ 41	89/ 42	86/ 41
3	36/ 17	22/ 11	13/ 6	46/ 22	28/ 13	16/ 7.6	32/ 15	27/ 13	56/ 27	31/ 15	36/ 17	20/ 10	36/ 17	29/ 14	26/ 12	28/ 13	53/ 25	20/ 10	26/ 12	52/ 25
4	25/ 12	28/ 13	11/ 5	34/ 16	9/4	6/3	18/ 9	18/ 9	10/ 5	60/ 29	56/ 27	30/ 14	46/ 22	75/ 36	51/ 24	43/ 21	34/ 16	39/ 19	27/ 13	23/ 11
5	8/4	4/2	nil	3/1	nil	1/.5	2/1	1/.5	2/1	19/ 9	6/3	7/3	8/4	46/ 22	16/ 8	8/4	7/3	10/ 5	6/3	9/4
totl	210/100 per cent (number of students/percentage)									210/100 per cent (number of students/percentage)										

Table 5.8b Responses of the study group to the questionnaire before the start of the main study (categories 3 and 4)

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[18]The table above indicates the responses of students in the study group to the second two categories: *strategies of effective reading*, and *sources of reading difficulty*. The first includes (a) *mentally sounding out parts of words*, (b) *understanding the meaning of each word*, (c) *getting the overall meaning of the text*, (d) *pronouncing each whole word*, (e) *focusing on grammar*, (f) *relating the text to prior knowledge*, and (h) *concentrating on the details of the content*. The second includes (a) *sounds of words*, (b) *pronunciation of words*, (c) *identifying words*, (d) *syntax*, (e) *alphabet*, (f) *relating text to prior knowledge*, (g) *getting the overall meaning*, (h) *the organization of text*, (i) *summarizing*, (j) *skimming and scanning*, and (k) *transcoding information*. The numbersin the first column indicate: **0** = *no response*, **1** = *strong agreement*, **2** = *agreement*, **3** = *no idea*, **4** = *disagreement*, and **5** = *strong disagreement*.

catgr[19]	reading strategies associated with the best reader								learning strategies for fluent reading				
item	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
0	12/5.7	16/7.6	12/5.7	12/5.7	12/5.7	12/5.7	12/5.7	12/5.7	13/6.2	13/6.2	13/6.2	13/6.2	14/6.2
1	83/39.5	50/23.8	115/55	35/16.7	48/22.9	74/35	69/32.9	78/37	86/41	71/34	73/35	62/30	80/38
2	94/44.8	90/42.9	58/27.6	75/35.7	77/36.7	91/43.3	100/48	95/45.2	90/43	95/45	78/37	71/34	75/36
3	12/5.7	18/8.6	11/5.2	33/15.7	35/16.7	24/11.4	17/8	20/9.5	13/6.2	24/11	25/12	26/12	21/10
4	8/3.8	30/14.3	11/5.2	46/21.9	29/13.8	5/2.4	11/5	3/1.4	8/3.8	7/3.3	17/8	31/15	18/8.6
5	1/0.5	6/2.9	3/.14	9/4.3	9/4.3	4/1.9	1/0.5	2/1	nil	nil	4/1.9	nil	2/1
total	210/100 per cent (number of students / percentage)								210 students/100 per cent				

Table 5.8c Responses of the study group before the start of the main study (categories 5 and 6)

[19]*Table 5.8c* depicts the responses of the study group to the last two categories of the questionnaire (before the study). The two categories, in the first row, are *reading styles associated with the best reader*, and the *learning approaches to fluent reading*. The items in the first category (represented in letters) include (a) *recognizing words*, (b) *sounding out words*, (c) *understanding the overall meaning of a text*, (d) *using a dictionary*, (e) *guessing at word meanings*, (f) *integrating information*, (g) *focusing on details of content*, and (h) *grasping the organization of text*. The items in the second category include (a) *learning words*, (b) *improving pronunciation*, (c) *individualization of instruction*, (d) *taking responsibility for one's learning to read*, and (e) *depending on the teacher*. The numbers in the first column indicate **0** = *no response*, **1** = *strong agreement*, **2** = *agreement*, **3** = *no idea*, **4** = *disagreement*, and **5** = *strong disagreement*.

five items (Table 5.7c). These are (a) learning words, (b) improving pronunciation, (c) individualization of instruction, (d) autonomy or taking responsibility for one's learning, and (e) teacher dependence. 13 per cent (or 53), 7 per cent (or 30) and 6 per cent (or 25) of the students disagree with items (d), (c) and (e) respectively, while 12 per cent (or 52), 11 per cent (or 46) and 9 per cent (or 38) of the students doubt the effectiveness of items (e), (b) and (c) respectively. It is important to note that 49 per cent (or 204), 48 per cent (or 200), and 43 per cent (or 182) of the students respectively prefer *learning words* (vocabulary building), *improving pronunciation* and *individualization of instruction* in order to improve their reading ability.

The responses of the students who are assigned to the study group are summarized in Tables 5.8a, b, and c above. Each table displays two of the categories in the questionnaire. While the above analysis of the responses refers to all social science first year students selected for the study to form control and study groups (420 students in thirteen sections, as stated in Chapter 4 above), the following focuses on the responses of the students in the six sections assigned to the study group consisting of 210 students. On the average, about 6 per cent (or 12 out of the 210) of the students have not responded to the questionnaire for various reasons.

In the first category (that is, *confidence in one's ability to use effective reading strategies*), (Table 5.8a) the most preferred strategies are items (b) (51 per cent or 107), (c) (51 per cent or 107), and (a) (50 per cent or 105). While items (d) (17 per cent or 36) and (a) (15 per cent or 32) are the most doubted as strategies the students can handle with confidence, items (b) and (c) are taken as strategies students are able to manipulate with confidence. It is also important to note that item (a) (8 per cent or 16) is also reported as a strategy students do not have the confidence to employ for effective reading. In sum students feel that they have the confidence in their ability to *recognize the difference between main points and supporting details*, to *relate information within the text*, and to *anticipate what will come next in the text.*

In the second category (Table 5.8a), the preferred *repair strategies* in reading are items (b) (45 per cent or 94), (a) (43 per cent or 90), (c) (38 per cent or 79) and (d) (37 per

cent or 77). It is important to note that 46 per cent (or 96) of the students strongly agree with item (d) as their repair strategy. 50 per cent (or 105) strongly disagree with item (e), and 46 per cent (or 97) disagree with item (f). About 12 per cent or 25 students doubt the effectiveness of item (b) as a repair strategy. In sum, most students feel that *reading the problematic part* as an effective reading strategy, and *giving up and stopping reading* and *asking for help from teachers* as ineffective.

The third category (Table 5.8b) consists of nine items. The items marked as *effective reading strategies* by the students are (e) (54 per cent or 114), (f) (53 per cent or 111) and (g) (51 per cent or 108). Items that students doubt whether they can be taken as effective strategies are (i) (27 per cent or 56 students), (d) (22 per cent or 46) and (a) (17 per cent or 36). About 16 per cent (or 34) of the students disagree with item (d), and 4 per cent (or 8 students) strongly disagree with item (a). In sum, most students report that effective reading strategies include *focusing on grammar*, *relating text to prior knowledge*, and *concentrating on the details of content*. The least effective reading strategy is considered to be *pronouncing each whole word.*

The fourth category (Table 5.8b), which summarizes the *sources of reading difficulty*, consists of eleven items. About 52 per cent (110) of the students consider that item (c) is the most difficult. About 25 per cent each (53 and 52) doubt whether items (h) and (k) are sources of difficulty and, in fact, 36 per cent (or 75 students) disagree with item (e). Briefly, most students consider that *identifying words* is the major source of their reading difficulty, and *the alphabet* as causing the least reading difficulty.

The fifth category (Table 5.8c) consists of eight items on reading strategies associated with fluent readers. 48 per cent (100), 45 per cent (95), 44.8 per cent (94) of the students identify items (g), (h) and (a) respectively as strategies employed by the best readers and 55 per cent (115) of the students strongly agree that item (c) is associated with fluent readers. Few students report their doubts regarding these strategies. The highest percentage is 16.7 per cent (35 students) for item (e), and 15.7 per cent (33 students) for item (d). 21.9 per cent (46 students) disagree with item (d). To summarize, most students believe that the best reader is identified with the following reading strategies:

Ctr	Confidence in one's ability to...[20]					repair strategies in reading					strategies of effective reading							
item	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)
0	27/13	27/13	30/14	28/13	30/14	27/13	28/13	28/13	29/14	28/13	29/14	27/13	27/13	27/13	27/13	27/13	27/13	30/14
1	46/22	73/35	49/23	65/31	81/37	62/30	61/29	81/39	6/3	5/2.4	36/17	81/39	15/7	35/17	54/26	45/21	35/17	27/13
2	72/34	82/39	101/48	83/40	80/38	67/32	69/33	67/32	10/5	11/5	67/32	69/33	61/29	77/37	97/46	82/39	90/43	80/38
3	54/26	24/11	24/11	25/20	16/7.6	29/14	36/17	27/13	23/11	30/14	38/18	19/9	53/25	47/22	28/13	33/16	44/21	57/27
4	10/5	4/2	6/2.9	8/9	3/1.4	19/9	11/5	6/3	50/24	88/42	35/17	13/6	46/22	21/10	4/2	19/9	14/7	16/8
5	1/0.5	nil	nil	1/0.5	nil	6/3	5/2.4	1/0.5	92/44	48/23	5/2.4	1/0.5	8/3.8	3/1.4	nil	4/2	nil	nil
total	210/100 per cent					210/100 per cent					210/100 per cent							

Table 5.9a Responses of the study groups after the end of the main study (categories 1,2 and 3)

[20]The first row consists of the first three categories of the post test questionnaire on reading. The second row depicts the items in each category. In the first category, that is *confidence in one's ability to ...* the items represented by letters are (a) *predict*, (b) *recognize the difference between main points and supporting details*, (c) *relate information within text*, (d) *evaluate or judge what is read*, and (e) *use prior knowledge for reading comprehension*. In the second category, that is, *repair strategies*, the items included are, (a) *continue reading and hope for clarification further on*, (b) *read the problematic part*, (c) *go back to a point before the problematic part and reread from there*, (d) *stop reading*, and (e) *depend on teachers' help*. The third category, *effective reading strategies*, includes (a) *understanding the meaning of each word*, (b) *getting the overall meaning of text*, (c) *pronouncing each whole word*, (d) *using grammar*, (e) *use of prior knowledge*, (f) *looking up words in a dictionary*, (g) *focusing on details of content*, and (h) *focusing on the organization of the text*. The numbers in the first column indicate 0 = *no response*, 1 = *strong agreement*, 2 = *agreement*, 3 = *no idea*, 4 = *disagreement*, and 5 = *strong disagreement*.

ctr [21]	sources of reading difficulty									reading strategies of the best reader							learning to read				
itm	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
0	27/ 13	27/ 13	27/ 13	27/ 13	27/ 13	27/ 13	32/ 15	27/ 13	28/ 13	28/ 13	28/ 13	28/ 13	30/ 14	28/ 13	28/ 13	35/ 16.7	28/ 13	28/ 13	28/ 13	28/ 13	28/ 13
1	28/ 13	37/ 17.6	23/ 11	23/ 11	32/ 15	17/ 8	37/ 18	33/ 15.7	34/ 16	73/ 34.8	58/ 27.6	32/ 15	53/ 25	78/ 37	58/ 27.6	79/ 37.6	83/ 40	76/ 36	54/ 26	60/ 29	90/
2	29/ 13.8	78/ 37	52/ 24.8	44/ 21	53/ 25	63/ 30	64/ 31	77/ 37	65/ 31	75/ 35.7	67/ 32	54/ 25.7	65/ 31	74/ 35	72/ 34	65/ 31	76/ 36	75/ 35.7	81/ 39	78/ 37	
3	50/ 23.8	34/ 16	52/ 24.8	51/ 24	35/ 16.7	61/ 29	42/ 20	31/ 17.6	46/ 22	24/ 11.4	39/ 18.6	51/ 24	30/ 14	21/ 10	34/ 16	23/ 11	16/ 8	24/ 11	33/ 16	35/ 17	22/
4	64/ 30.5	30/ 14	50/ 23.8	61/ 29	56/ 26.7	38/ 18	29/ 13.8	5/ 2.4	33/ 15.7	10/ 5	17/ 8	36/ 17	20/ 9.5	7/ 3	14/ 6.7	4/ 2	7/ 3	7/ 3	12/ 6	7/ 3	
5	12/6	4/2	6/3	4/2	7/3	4/2	6/3	nil	4/2	nil	1/0.5	9/4.3	12/6	2/1	4/2	4/2	nil	nil	2/1	2/1	
ttl.	210/100 (number of students/percentage)									210/100 (number of students/percentage)							210/100 (number of students/per				

Table 5.9b Responses of the study group after the end of the main study (categories 4, 5 and 6)

[21] *Table 5.9b* shows the responses of the study group to the last three categories in the post study questionnaire. The first row indicates the first category is the *sources of reading difficulty*. In this category, the items included are (a) *sounds*, (b) *words*, (c) *syntax*, (d) *use of prior knowledge*, (e) *the overall meaning of text*, (f) *organization of text*, (g) *extracting salient points*, (h) *getting the general sense of text*, and (i) *transcoding information*. In the second category, *the qualities of the best reader*, the following are included: (a) *recognizing words*, (b) *pronouncing words*, (c) *using a dictionary*, (d) *guessing at word meanings*, (e) *using background knowledge*, (f) *focusing on details of content*, and (g) *grasping the organization of text*. In the third category, *effective methods of learning to read*, the following are included: (a) *learning words*, (b) *improving pronunciation*, (c) *effective teaching*, (d) *learning grammar*, and (e) *reading intensively and extensively*. The numbers in the first column indicate 0 = *no response*, 1 = *strong agreement*, 2 = *agreement*, 3 = *no idea*, 4 = *disagreement*, and 5 = *strong disagreement*.

focusing on details of content and *grasping the organization of text*, and the strategy least used by the best reader is considered to be *using a dictionary*.

The last category (Table 5.8c) has five items, as explained above. None strongly disagree with items (a), (b) and (d) as approaches to learning to read. 14.8 per cent (31) disagree with item (d). 45 per cent (95) and 43 per cent (90) of the students agree with items (b) and (a) respectively. The least they agree with seems to be item (d) (34 per cent or 71 students). About 38 per cent (80 students) strongly agree with item (e). In other words, most students prefer *learning words* (or developing vocabulary) as a strategy of learning to improve their reading, and feel '*taking the responsibility for one's learning*' will not help them improve their reading ability.

After the end of the study, a similar questionnaire was administered. As indicated, only the students in the study group were made to respond to the questionnaire. The main objective is to see whether the students have assumed different views about the categories discussed above. It is understood that some of the preferred reading strategies mentioned above, could be selected as effective in the second questionnaire. In fact, some of the reading strategies have been found to be used by successful readers (Hosenfeld 1984). The data compiled (***Appendix 2.3***) is summarized in Table 5.9a and Table 5.9b above. The maximum number of respondents to be expected is 210. However, due to various problems, about 27 students (12.9 per cent) have not responded to the questionnaire. This questionnaire, like the first, has six categories: confidence in one's ability to employ identified reading strategies, listing repair strategies, employing effective reading strategies, identifying sources of reading difficulty, and the reading strategies of the best reader, and selecting an appropriate approach to learning to read in English. Each category has a number of items. The first category has five; the second, five; the third, eight; the fourth, nine; the fifth, seven; and the last category, five.

Category one (Table 5.9a) asks the respondents to express their level of *confidence in their ability* to employ the following appropriate reading strategies: (a) prediction, (b) recognizing the difference between main points and supporting details, (c) relating information within text, (d) evaluating or judging what is read, and (e) using schema for

comprehension. 48 per cent (101), 39.5 per cent (83), and 39 per cent (82) of the students agree with items (c), (d) and (b) respectively. About 5 per cent (10) and 4 per cent (8) of the students disagree with items (a) and (d) respectively. Similarly about 26 per cent (54) of the students doubt whether or not item (a) is appropriate. To sum up, most students report that they have confidence in their ability to *relate information within text*, and they feel that they are weak in *anticipating what will come next in a text*.

Category two of the questionnaire (Table 5.9a) includes the following *repair strategies*: (a) continue reading and hope for further clarification, (b) read the problematic part, (c) go back to a point before the problematic part and reread from there, (d) stop reading, and (e) depend on teachers for help. About 42 per cent (88) and 24 per cent (50) of the students disagree with items (e) and (d) respectively. In fact, 44 per cent (92) and 23 per cent (48) of the students strongly disagree with items (d) and (e) respectively. The items preferred are (b) (33 per cent or 69), (c) (32 per cent or 67) and (a) (32 per cent or 67). About 17 per cent (36) doubt the effectiveness of item (b) as a repair strategy. Briefly, most students report that when faced with a reading problem they *go back to a point before the problematic part and reread from there*, and the least effective strategy for most students is *stopping reading*.

The third category (Table 5.9a) (*effective reading strategies*) comprises (a) understanding meanings of each word, (b) getting the overall meaning of text, (c) pronouncing each whole word, (d) syntax, (e) schema use, (f) looking up words in a dictionary, (g) details of content, and (h) organization of text. The data indicates that about 22 per cent (46) of the students disagree with item (c), and 27 per cent (57) and 25 per cent (53) of the students report that they doubt the appropriateness of items (h) and (c) respectively. However, 46 per cent (97) and 43 per cent (90) select items (e) and (g) as effective strategies of reading. About 4 per cent (8) of the students, the largest in the category, strongly disagree with item (c). To summarize, most students select *getting the overall meaning of a text* and *using prior knowledge* as effective reading strategies, and *pronouncing each whole word* as the least effective.

The fourth category (Table 5.9b) (*sources of reading difficulty*) includes (a) sounds, (b)

words, (c) syntax, (d) schema use, (e) overall meaning of text, (f) organization of text, (g) extracting salient points, (h) getting the general sense of a text, and (i) transcoding information. 18 per cent (37), 18 per cent (37) and 16 per cent (34) of the students strongly agree that items (b), (g) and (i) respectively as are sources of reading difficulty. 37 per cent (78), 37 per cent (77), 31 per cent (65), 31 per cent (64), and 30 per cent (63) of the students agree that items (b), (h), (i), (g), and (f) are sources of reading difficulty. 31 per cent (64) of the students disagree with item (a) as a source of reading difficulty, and 29 per cent (61) doubt whether item (f) can be considered as a source of difficulty. In short, the majority of the students indicate that *words* constitute the significant source of their reading difficulty and feel that *sounds* pose the least reading difficulty.

The fifth category (Table 5.9b) (*reading strategies of the best reader*) comprises the following reading abilities: (a) recognizing words, (b) pronouncing words, (c) using a dictionary, (d) guessing at word meanings, (e) schema use, (f) focusing on details of content, and (g) grasping the organization of a text. 38 per cent (79), 37 per cent (78), and 35 per cent (73) of the students strongly agree that items (g), (e), and (a) respectively are reading strategies employed by the best reader. Only 24 per cent (51) of the students doubt whether or not item (c) can be considered as a reading strategy of fluent readers. In brief, most respondents claim that the best reader *recognizes words* but is least associated with the *use of a dictionary*.

The last category (Table 5.9b) (*effective methods of learning to read*) consists of (a) learning words, (b) improving pronunciation, (c) effective teaching, (d) learning grammar, and (e) reading intensively and extensively. Almost none of the students strongly disagree with any of these items. However, about 6 per cent (12) of the students disagree with item (c). 43 per cent (90) and 40 per cent (83) strongly agree with items (e) and (a) respectively. Only 17 per cent (35) and 16 per cent (33) of the students doubt that items (d) and (c) can be effective approaches to learning to read. Briefly, the students prefer *learning words* and *reading intensively and extensively* in order to become fluent readers in English for academic purposes. They do not think *improvement in the teaching methodology* will help them much to improve their reading ability.

In summary, the responses of the study group to the questionnaire on reading administered at the beginning and end of the study can be more or less summarized as follows:

firstly, on the category of *confidence in one's ability to employ effective reading strategies*, before the study, most students report that they are confident in their ability to *recognize the difference between main points and supporting details* (51 per cent), ***relate information within a text*** (51 per cent), and *predict what will come next in a text* (50 per cent). At the end of the study, they indicate that they are confident in using these strategies: *relating information within a text* (48 per cent), *evaluating or judging what is read* (39.5 per cent), and *recognizing the difference between main points and supporting details* (39 per cent). It is important to note that the decrease in percentage may indicate now that the students more aware of their level of reading than at the beginning of the study. However, the common strategies that students claim to have a confidence in employing remain almost the same - *recognizing the difference between main points and supporting detail*, and *relating information within a text.*

Secondly, the most preferred repair strategies at the beginning of the study are *reading the problematic part* (45 per cent), and *keeping on reading and hoping for clarification further on* (43 per cent). The most unfavoured strategy seems to be *giving up and stopping reading* (50 per cent), and *asking for help from teachers* (46 per cent). At the end of the study, students still prefer *reading the problematic part* (33 per cent), *continue reading and hope for further clarification* (32 per cent), and *going back to a point before the problematic part and rereading from there* (32 per cent).

Thirdly, the three most effective reading strategies identified by the students at the beginning of the study are *using background knowledge* for reading comprehension (54 per cent), *looking up words in a dictionary* (53 per cent), and *focusing on details of content* (51 per cent). At the end of the study, *using background knowledge* (46 per cent), and *focusing on details of content* (43 per cent) are selected as the most effective reading strategies.

Fourthly, at the beginning of the study, most students report that the source of reading difficulty is *recognizing words* (52 per cent). About 36 per cent of the students do not think *the alphabet* is a source of reading difficulty for them. At the end of the study, *words* (37 per cent), and *getting the general sense of a text* (37 per cent) are reported as the sources of reading difficulty.

Fifthly, most students agree at the beginning of the study that the fluent reader focuses on: *understanding the overall meaning of a text* (55 per cent), and *focusing on the details of content* (48 per cent). At the end of the study, they indicate that the best reader concentrates on *grasping the organization of a text* (38 per cent), *using background knowledge* (37 per cent), and *recognizing words* (35 per cent).

Lastly, regarding the approach to learning to read, at the beginning of the study, most students select *improving pronunciation* (45 per cent), and *learning words* (43 per cent). At the end of the study, most students prefer *reading intensively and extensively* (43 per cent), and *learning words* (40 per cent) as the most effective approaches to help them to learn to read better.

5.32 Test results

The test package consists of the following: firstly, two sets of reading comprehension tests taken from the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate *First Certificate in English* (***Appendix 4***). These two tests are intended to help assess the students' reading comprehension ability before and at the end of the study. Secondly, four sets of cloze tests (***Appendix 5***) with seventh word random deletion are drawn from the first year students' geography and history course books to measure the levels of readability of the course books at the beginning and end of the study. This is intended to find out whether at the end of the study the students in the study group can handle these course books more effectively than the control group do, and whether the study group have improved in this respect since the pretest on these course books. In short, it is designed to discover whether the readability levels of these course books have significantly decreased for the study group. And lastly, two sets of general English language ability tests (***Appendix 6***) selected from the final examination papers of the first year two service English courses - Freshman English 101A and Freshman English 101B - are administered to find out whether students in the study group, after having used the individualized approach to developing reading in English for academic purposes, have significantly improved in their linguistic ability, or at least, the control group who have not used the individualized approach do not perform better than those in the study group.

Briefly, the rationale for the study is based on the assumption that: first, the gap between students' reading ability in English and the readability levels of their course books has been created because of the students' lack of appropriate background knowledge or the *critical mass of knowledge*; second, the current approach employed by the service English courses seems to be ineffective in helping students develop this indispensable systemic and schematic knowledge; and lastly, a change of approach from the current one to the individualization of learning to read may enhance students' formal and content knowledge to enable them to significantly narrow the gap. It has been argued, following Allwright's (1988) contention, that individualization is not alien to language classrooms, and, thus, an approach to reading instruction that capitalizes on this aspect of classroom behaviour may be effective in narrowing the alleged gap significantly.

5.321 Reading comprehension tests

As it is indicated in ***Appendix 4***, each reading comprehension test consists of three short texts, each text followed by a number of multiple choice questions - questions that assess both recall and inference-making skills of readers. Most of the questions cannot be answered word for word from the texts, and they are similar to the questions the students have handled when using the ***SRA*** reading materials. Some of the texts may require the knowledge of different cultures for comprehension or for the effective *negotiation of meaning* (Widdowson 1984) between the readers and the texts (for instance, see the third passage of each test, ***Appendix 4***). But it is assumed that in general students may not find these parts too difficult to follow.

Out of the twenty one sections of social science first year students, thirteen sections involving 420 students have been selected to take the reading comprehension test. The valid cases for both the reading comprehension tests are 309 and 354 in the pretest and post test respectively. The tests are marked out of 15 each, and, accordingly, the highest scores are 12 and 13 in the pretest and post test respectively and the lowest in both the pretest and post test is 1. It is indicated that the scores of a great number of the students lie between 5 and 8. Table 5.10 indicates that the majority of the students have performed better in the post test than in the pretest. In order to establish whether or not there is any significant change in the students' ability to read, and whether or not the improvement could be attributed to the approach used in developing students' reading ability, the t-test of hypothesis testing has been employed to establish the degree of significance of the difference between the averages (means) of the scores that are either paired samples (for *intragroup* means difference) or independent (for *intergroup* means difference).

As implied in the analysis of the scores of the pilot study above, the reading comprehension results of both the study and the control groups have been analyzed in order to find out the following: first, whether there is any significant difference in the abilities of the two groups at the beginning of the programme (*initial intergroup comparison*) in order to establish that both belong to the same population with similar

Group [22]	Test	number of stds.	means	standrd deviatn	standrd error	F-val	2-tail prob.	Pooled Variance Estimate			Separate Variance Estimate			remark
								t-value	Deg. of freedm	2-tail prob.	t-value	Deg. of freedm	2-tail prob.	
Study	pretest	202	6.3317	2.145	.151	1.06	.716	-.34	305	.738	-.33	205.38	.740	not signif.
Contrl	pretest	105	6.4190	2.209	.216									
Study	posttest	183	7.0109	2.570	.190	1.04	.788	2.22	352	.027	2.22	349.28	.027	signif.
Contrl	posttest	171	6.3977	2.622	.201									

Group	Test	number of stds.	means	standrd deviatn	standrd error	mean differ.	st.devtn differ	st.error differ.	corr.	2-tail prob.	t-value	Deg. of freedm	2-tail prob.	remark
Study	pretest	180	6.3667	2.174	.162	.6389	2.699	.201	.362	.000	3.18	179	.002	signif.
Study	posttest	180	7.0056	2.569	.191									
Contrl	pretest	85	6.3176	2.258	.245	.5294	2.653	.288	.423	.000	1.84	84	.069	not signif.
Contrl	posttest	85	6.8471	2.644	.287									

Table 5.10 T-test for level of significance of means' difference for reading comprehension performance of both groups (corpus study)

[22]The first part of the table (consisting of the first five rows) shows the *t-test* for the means' difference of the study and control groups in the pretest and post tes The items on the first row are number of students who took the test, means, standard deviations, standard errors, F-value, 2-tail prob., t-value, degrees of freedom, 2-ta prob. (the last three under pooled variance), t-value, degrees of freedom, 2-tail prob. (under separate variance estimate), and lastly, remark or *level of significance.*

The second part of the table (rows 7 to 11) indicates the paired samples t-test of the means' difference of each group during the pretest and the post test. The subheadings for this part (row 7) are number of students who took the test, means, standard deviations, standard errors, means' difference, standard deviation difference, standard error difference, corr., 2-tail probability, t-value, degrees of freedom, 2-tail probability, and *level of significance.*

level of ability; second, whether there is any significant difference in the target abilities of the two groups at the end of the programme (*terminal intergroup comparison*) in order to attribute the difference in the two means to the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the approach used; and lastly, whether there is any significant difference in the abilities of the study group before and after the programme (*initial-terminal intragroup comparison*) in order to justify the effectiveness of the approach.

As indicated in Table 5.10, the group t-test for the scores on the reading comprehension pretest depicts that the scores of 202 and 105 students from the study and control groups respectively have been considered for the analysis. The means and standard deviations of the two groups respectively are 6.3317 and 2.145 (study), and 6.4190 and 2.209 (control). The t-test for the significance of the difference between the two means makes it apparent that the two means are not statistically different at $p = 0.05$[23]. Thus, it can be considered that at the beginning of the programme, the two groups have the same level of reading ability.

At the end of the programme, the means of the scores of the two groups are calculated as 7.0109 (study group, number of students 183) and 6.3077 (control group, number of students 171). The standard deviations of the scores of the two groups are 2.570 and 2.622 respectively. The t-test indicates that the two means are significantly different (Table 5.10). In other words, the test results imply that the *approach* variable has brought about a significant improvement in the reading comprehension ability of the study group when compared with that of the control group. It might also be necessary to find out if the study group have improved in their reading ability since the pretest. The paired samples t-test indicates that there are 180 valid pairs. The means of the pretest and post test scores on the reading comprehension test are 6.3667 and 7.0056, and the standard deviations are 2.174 and 2.569 respectively. The comparison between the t-tabulated and t-calculated values reveals that the difference between the two means is statistically significant at $p < 0.05$. Hence, it can be tentatively held that the approach has helped the students in the study group to make a significant improvement in their reading ability.

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[23]The level of significance, expressed as p, should not exceed 0.05 in order to establish that the means under consideration are significantly different.

Of course, this cannot be confirmed without examining the performance of the control group during the pretest and post test. The valid pairs for paired t-test of the means of the scores of the control group are indicated as 85. The means and standard deviations of the scores of the control group in the pretest and post test of the reading comprehension are 6.3176 and 2.258 (pretest), and 6.8471 and 2.644 (post test). The t-test indicates that the difference in the means is not statistically significant at p = 0.05. As indicated, it can be stated that while the study group have improved in their reading comprehension ability as borne out by the compiled data, the control group seem not to have significantly improved. All other things being constant, it appears that the students in the study group have been helped much in their reading to perform significantly better than the control group.

5.322 Readability tests

The course books considered for the assessment of readability levels are the geography and history course books. It has been indicated in section 2.7 Chapter 2 that since the pilot study, the first year courses - Marxist-Leninist Philosophy and Political Economy - have been reduced to *electives*[24]. Other courses are in the process of being reinstated to become *compulsory* in place of the two courses. As a result, since the new courses do not yet have specific course books, the study has been limited to considering only those courses that have specific course books. Accordingly, in the said academic year, the compulsory courses are Ethiopian history, Ethiopian geography and the service English courses. Hence, the readability tests are taken from the geography and history course books.

According to Figure 5.6 below, if the cut-off points for *frustrational*, *instructional*, and *independent* are taken to be 0-9, 10-12 and 13 and above respectively, out of the 352 students who have taken the test, about 90 per cent, 8 per cent and 2 per cent are in the first, second and third levels respectively. Apparently, it looks that the sample text taken from the geography course book is difficult for most of the students. At the end of the

[24]Electives are optional courses. Compulsory are those courses students are obliged to take as part of their major, minor or general education courses.

study, out of the 309 students who have taken the test, about 77 per cent, 19 per cent and 4 per cent are on the *frustrational*, *instructional* and *independent* levels respectively. It

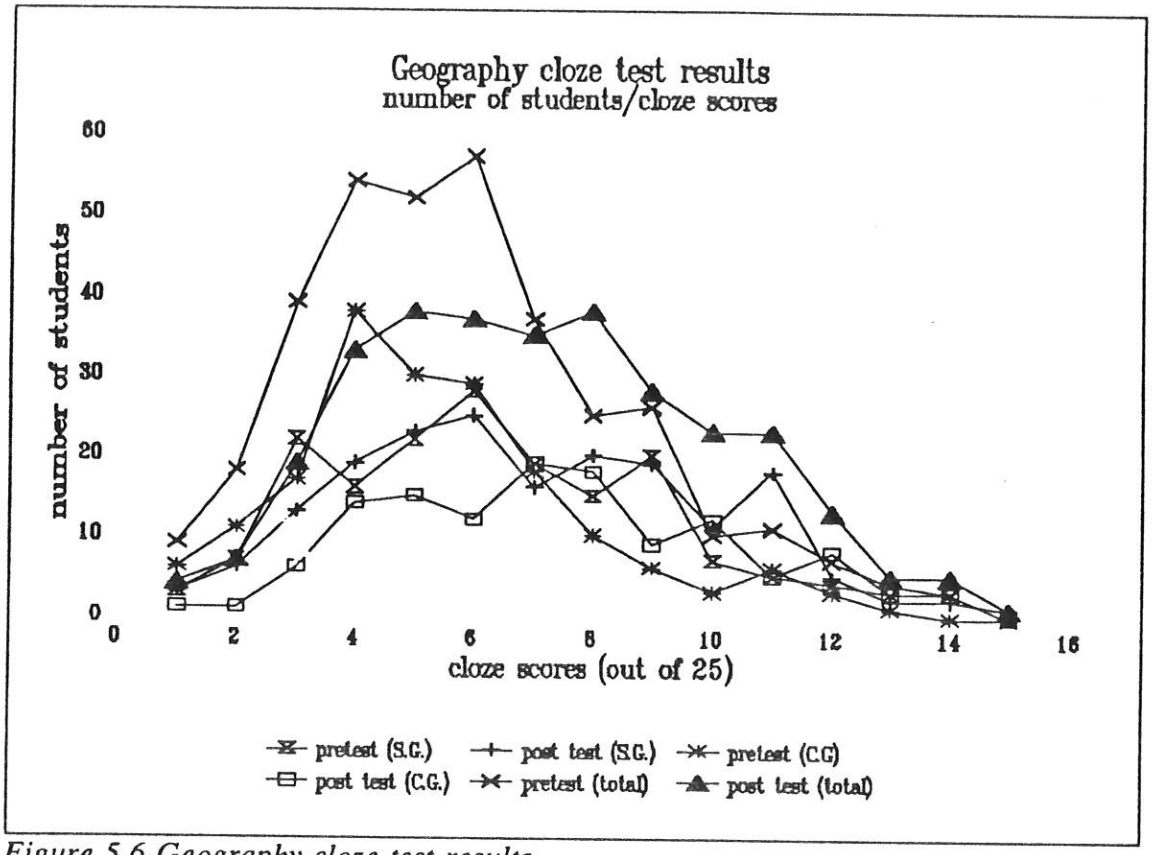

Figure 5.6 Geography cloze test results

seems that students, even after a semester's course in service English, find their geography course book not easy to read. However, it is necessary to hold this view as tentative since it has to be statistically established that the geography course book is really difficult for the students to understand (see 5.222 above).

The compiled data for the pretest on geography course book (Table 5.11) indicates that there are only 173 and 179 students in the study and control groups respectively who have valid scores on the geography cloze pretest. The means and standard deviations of the two groups respectively are 6.3988 and 2.875 (study), and 5.3911 and 2.443 (control group). It is interesting to note that the difference between the means of the scores of the study and control groups is statistically significant at $p < 0.05$. The results of the geography cloze pretest seems to imply that the two groups are different in their reading ability - the study being better than the control at the beginning of the study.

The geography cloze post test results (Table 5.11) indicate that the means of the scores of the study (number = 183) and control (number = 126) groups are 6.9672 and 7.4206 and the standard deviations are 2.961 and 2.863 respectively. It is calculated that the difference between the means of the two groups is not statistically significant. The two groups, it can be argued, have similar level of ability as measured by this particular test.

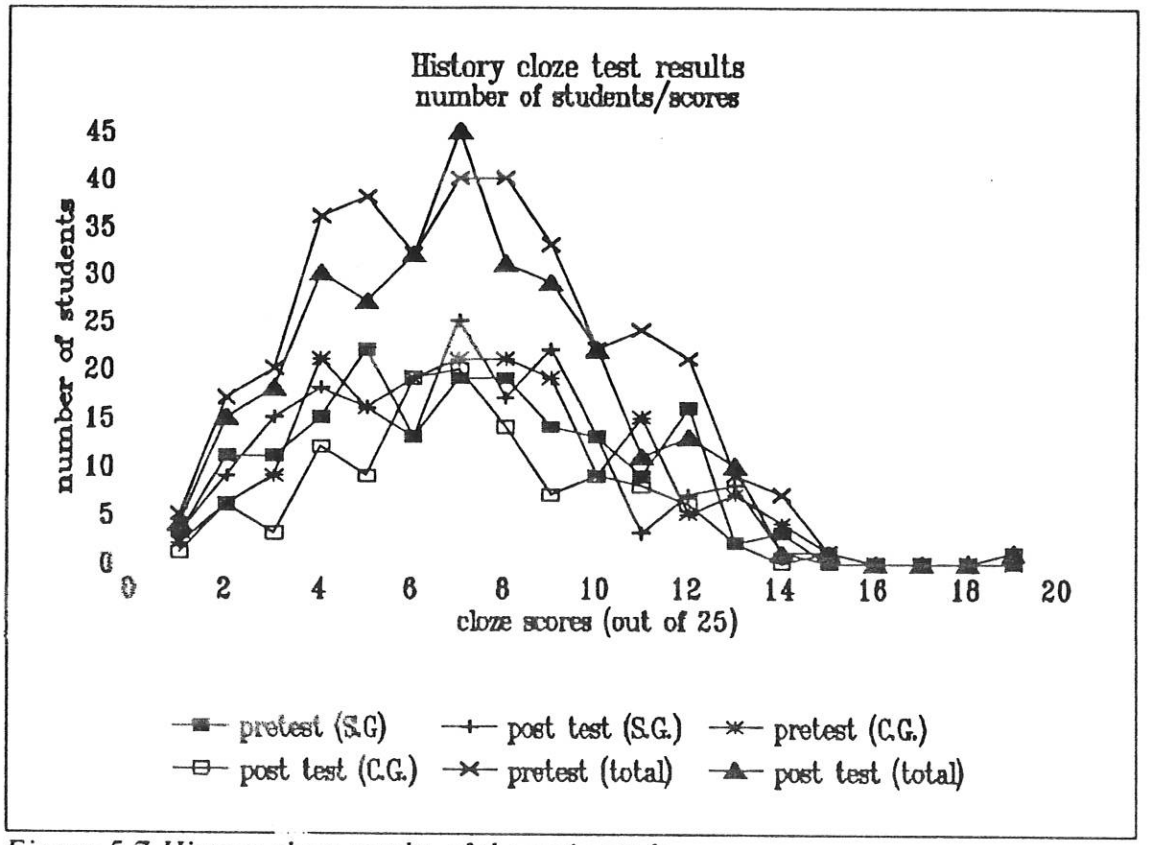

Figure 5.7 History cloze results of the main study

As a result of this, it is very difficult to assess the difference the approach has brought about in this respect. The paired t-test of the means of the geography cloze pretest and post test of the study group shows that the two means (6.424 and 7.019 for 158 cases, and standard deviations 2.809 and 2.881 respectively) are significantly different at $p < 0.05$. This implies that because of the approach used, the study group have improved since the pretest in their reading comprehension ability. However, this can only be held if a similar improvement cannot be established for the control group. The control group's means for the geography pretest and post test are 5.40 and 7.46. It is calculated that the two means are significantly different at $p < 0.05$. Thus, the data compiled at the end of the study proves to be insufficient to reject the null hypothesis that there is no difference between

the two groups in their ability to read the geography course book.

Thus, according to Table 5.11, 87 per cent, 9 per cent and 4 per cent of the students in the study group are in the *frustrational*, *instructional* and *independent* levels respectively in the pretest. 93 per cent and 7 per cent of the students in the control group are respectively in the *frustrational* and in the *instructional* levels. 79 per cent, 18 per cent

Group	Test	Level	History[25]		Geography	
Study	pretest	1	127	75%	151	87%
		2	38	22%	16	9%
		3	5	3%	6	4%
	post test	1	143	82%	144	78.7%
		2	23	13.1%	34	18.6%
		3	9	5.1%	5	2.7%
Control	pretest	1	134	76.6%	166	92.7%
		2	29	16.6	12	6.7%
		3	12	6.8%	1	.6%
	post test	1	98	78.4%	95	75.4%
		2	23	18.4%	25	19.8%
		3	4	3.2%	6	4.8%

Table 5.11 Levels of readability of social science freshman course books - corpus study

and 3 per cent in the study group are respectively in the *frustrational*, *instructional* and *independent* levels. Though the percentage of students in the lowest level has decreased from 88 per cent in the pretest to 78 per cent in the post test, the percentage for the independent level has remained relatively the same. 76 per cent, 20 per cent and 4 per cent of the students in the control group are in the *frustrational*, *instructional* and *independent* levels respectively. When compared with the pretest results, the percentage for *instructional* has increased and that for *frustrational* has decreased. However, the

[25]The numbers under the level column indicate **1**, *frustrational*; **2**, *instructional*; and **3**, *independent* levels of readability.

changes in the percentages indicated cannot be considered as significant in order to assert that the students in the study group have found their geography text book easier to read at the end of the study than at the beginning.

Figure 5.7 above summarizes the scores of the students involved in the main study in both pretest and post test cloze drawn from the first year history course book (Table 5.11). A total of 345 and 300 students have taken the pretest and post test respectively. In the pretest, about 71 per cent, 23 per cent and 6 per cent of the students are in the *frustrational*, *instructional* and *independent* levels respectively. In the post test, about 80 per cent, 16 per cent and 4 per cent of the students are in the *frustrational*, *instructional* and *independent* levels respectively.

Out of the 345 students who have taken the history cloze pretest, 175 and 170 students belong to the control and study groups respectively. In the control group, 77 per cent, 16 per cent and 7 per cent of the students are in the *frustrational*, *instructional* and *independent* levels respectively. About 75 per cent, 22 per cent and 3 per cent of the students in the study group are in the *frustrational*, *instructional* and *independent* levels respectively.

The means of the scores of the two groups in the history cloze pretest are calculated as 7.094 (study) and 7.325 (control) and the standard deviations are 3.217 study) and 3.102 (control). The t-test for means difference indicates that the two means are not significantly different - thus, establishing the fact that the two groups belong to the same population.

In the post test (Table 5.11), out of the 125 students in the control group, 78 per cent, 19 per cent and 3 per cent are in the *frustrational*, *instructional* and *independent* levels respectively. Out of the 175 students in the study group, 82 per cent, 13 per cent and 5 per cent are in the *frustrational*, *instructional* and *independent* levels respectively. The data compiled from the history cloze post test indicates that the means of the scores of the study and control groups are 6.714 and 6.952 and their standard deviations are 3.180 and 3.195 respectively. It has been calculated that the mean difference is not statistically

significant. If the scores of the study group in the history cloze pretest and post test are compared, the means of the pairs (number of cases = 151) are 7.31 and 6.92 respectively. The standard deviati ons are 3.258 and 3.112 for the pretest and post test respectively. Accordingly, it is calculated that the difference between the two means is not statistically significant. In fact, the performance of the control group in the post test is significantly lower than in the pretest at $p < 0.05$.

It has been argued above (section 5.222) that the cloze tests seem not to be appropriate to indicate any improvement in the performances of the students. This is attributable either to the nature of the cloze procedure (section 3.222 Chapter 3), the level of difficulty of the selected texts, or more significantly, the attitudes of the learners to the particular test (which may not necessarily be limited to the cloze test only). As indicated above (section 3.2221 Chapter 3; section 4.2 Chapter 4), the main justification for using the cloze procedure to assess readability levels of the course books is that the cloze procedure brings the text with its readership. It does not isolate the reader from the text. There are not, unlike the other readability formulae, preplanned parameters of fixing the readability of a particular text book. As mentioned in section 3.2221 Chapter 3, there seems to be no universal yardsticks for claiming that one text is more difficult than another for all readers of a certain age or grade level. The usual readability formulae are set based on specific population on specific texts, and for that, all variables, it is argued, are not taken into consideration (Klare 1969). Thus, it is assumed that these readability formulae are not appropriate for establishing the readability levels of the social science first year students' text books. It is argued that the cloze procedure is sensitive across sentence constraints and is effective in assessing differences in levels of readability (Jonz 1989). Moreover, the cloze procedure is employed for its simplicity in setting, applying and assessing (Harrison 1980). However, in both the pilot and the main study, it seems that the cloze procedure has proved to be an inappropriate tool to assess students' development in their ability to read through independent work. Despite the common sense that students learn more through more exposure (including teaching), the cloze test results indicate that the students are below their original level of reading ability, which is not corroborated by their performance in the reading comprehension tests discussed above. All other things

being constant, the cloze procedure has proved to be an ineffective tool for assessing readability levels of the mentioned course books.

5.323 Freshman English tests

It has been stated that the service English courses are meant to help students to cope with the language demands of their studies (section 2.6 Chapter 2). Tests are given at the end of each course to certify that students would not have any linguistic problems in their studies. It has been pointed out that since this study focused on the first year level, only the two first year English service courses - Freshman English 101A and Freshman English 101B - the former offered in the first semester and the latter in the second semester, are used to assess the general linguistic ability of the students.

Figure 5.8 below provides the summary of the students' scores in Freshman English at the beginning of the study - in fact, as soon as they joined the university. It might be interesting to find out how the compiled scores match with the conventional cut-off points used to transform raw scores to letter grades in Freshman English 101A examination scores. Table 5.12 below uses the commonly used cut-off points for assigning letter grades to grouped scores on Freshman English 101A and Freshman English 101B tests (Table 7.2 ***Appendix 7.2*** for a full list). It is admitted that there are variations to these cut-off points mostly depending on the test performance of the particular students who take the specific course in a given semester. If students of a particular semester have performed poorly in, for instance, Freshman English 101A final examination, the cut-off points are likely to be lowered. However, the guide-line drawing the cut-off points is the normal distribution curve; that is, the scores of the entire students who have taken the test are assumed to be normally distributed, and thus, the top 5 per cent, then 11 per cent, 68 per cent, 11 per cent, and the bottom 5 per cent of the scores are assigned the letter grades of ***A***, ***B***, ***C***, ***D*** and ***F*** respectively. Table 5.12 summarizes the results of the tests

course	group	test	number	mean	cut-off points for letter grades commonly used with Freshman English test scores									
					below 36 (F)[26]		36 to 49 (D)		50 to 70 (C)		71 to 84 (B)		85 and + (A)	
					number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%
FLEn 101A	study	pretest	186	25.9	55	29	40	21	67	36	20	11	4	2
	control	pretest	188	24.8	42	22	70	37	60	32	14	7	2	1
	study	posttest	203	32.9	22	11	39	19	77	38	50	24	15	7
	control	posttest	129	32.4	18	14	23	18	44	34	34	26	10	8
FLEn 101B	study	pretest	175	20.4	72	41	38	22	42	24	22	12	1	?
	control	pretest	182	19.0	90	49	29	16	55	30	8	4	-	-
	study	posttest	182	23.0	59	32	42	23	65	36	14	8	2	1
	control	posttest	125	22.9	40	32	27	22	49	39	9	7	-	-
FLEn 101A final exam.	study	final	207	68.2	2	1	26	12	71	34	80	38	28	13
	control	final	175	64.1	4	2	31	18	71	40	58	33	11	6

Table 5.12 Summary of the results of the Freshman English tests of the study and control groups (main study)

[26]The cut-off points for assigning letter grades to a range of scores mostly depends on the general performance of the students of the particular year. Basically, the cut-off points are a readaptation based on the normal distribution curve; thus, the top 5 per cent, then 11 per cent, 68 per cent, 11 per cent and the bottom 5 per cent are assigned the letter grades A, B, C, D, and F respectively. However, through the years, the usual cut-off points are the ones as indicated in Table 5.12 above. There is also some variation in the cut-off points for Freshman English 101A and Freshman English 101B, for the latter being more lenient, but the passing letter grade C lower limit being 50 marks. For practical purposes, they have been taken to follow similar cut-off points. Hence, the same cut-off points for scores have been used to summarize the range of scores of the two tests.

in Freshman English. The cut-off points used to summarize the scores are as follows: 85 per cent and above ***A***, 71 per cent to 84 per cent ***B***, 50 per cent to 70 per cent ***C***, 36 per cent to 49 ***D***, and 35 and below ***F***. A grade of ***C*** is considered a pass mark.

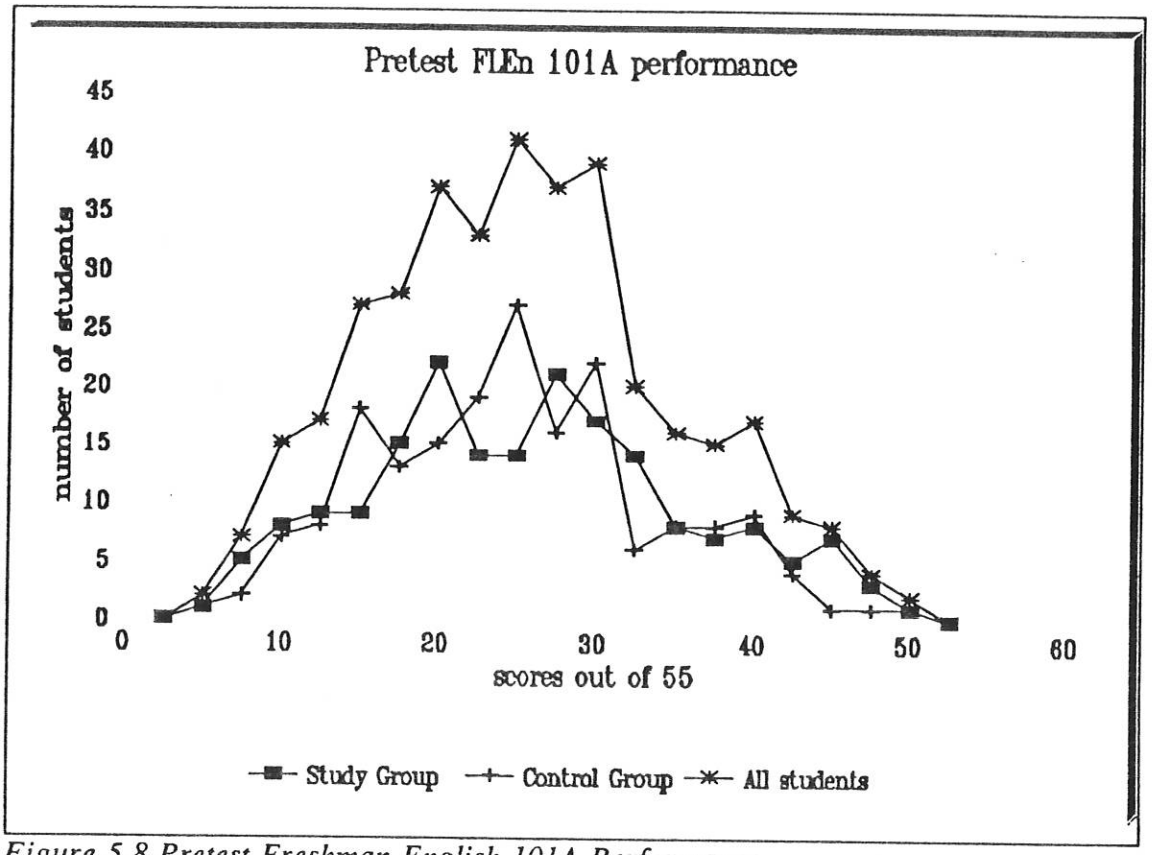

Figure 5.8 Pretest Freshman English 101A Performance

According to Figure 5.8 above (see Table 5.12 also), 374 students have taken the Freshman English 101A pretest. If the cut-off points for scores outlined above are used, about 1 per cent (6 students), 9 per cent (34 students), 34 per cent (127 students), 29 per cent (110 students) and 26 per cent (97 students) of the students get ***A***, ***B***, ***C***, ***D*** and ***F*** respectively in the Freshman English 101A pretest. This shows that more than 50 per cent of the students have managed to get a pass score in the course. It is to be noted that these students have just joined the university and it is confirmed that they do not have strong background knowledge in English (section 2.6 Chapter 2). However, these results indicate that more than half of the students could pass the Freshman English test without attending the course for a semester. These results may not necessarily be due to chance. It could be assumed that either the test is not reliable and valid, or that about 50 per cent

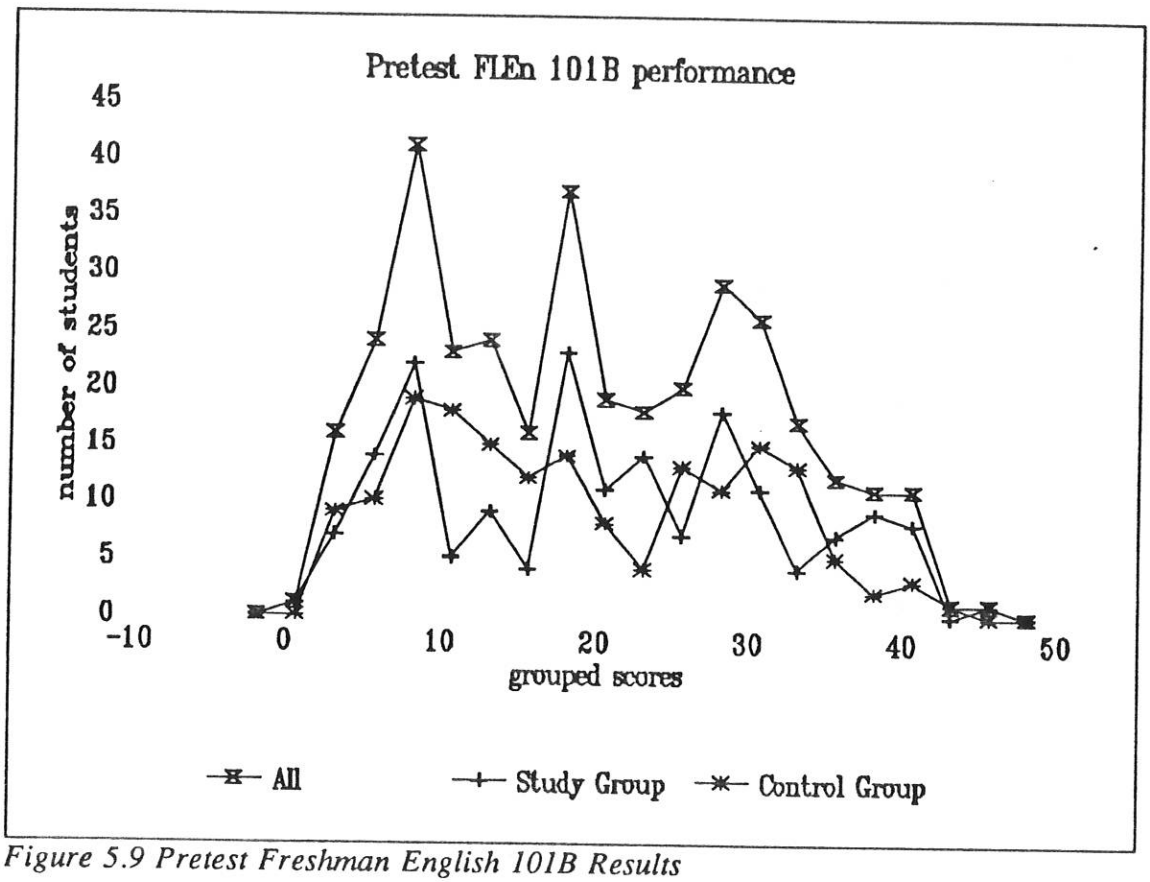

Figure 5.9 Pretest Freshman English 101B Results

of the students do not need to take Freshman English 101A for a semester - possibly a waste of manpower and resources. It might as well be justifiable to expect higher grades than these for the total population at the end of the study. It seems that this test as a tool to assess progress in learning through independent work might also be questionable.

Table 5.12 shows that out of the 186 students in the study group who have taken the Freshman English 101A pretest, about 2 per cent (4 students), 11 per cent (20 students), 36 per cent (67 students), 21 per cent (40 students) and 29 per cent (55 students), have scored ***A***, ***B***, ***C***, ***D***, and ***F*** respectively. About 50 per cent of the students have scored ***C*** and above. In the control group (188 students), 1 per cent (2 students), 7 per cent (14 students), 32 per cent (60 students), 37 per cent (70 students) and 22 per cent (42 students) of the students have scored ***A***, ***B***, ***C***, ***D*** and ***F*** respectively. In other words, about 40 per cent of the students in the control group have managed to pass the course.

Group [27]	Test	number of stds.	means	standrd deviatn	standrd error	F-val	2-tail prob.	Pooled Variance Estimate			Separate Variance Estimate			remark
								t-value	Deg. of freedm	2-tail prob.	t-value	Deg. of freedm	2-tail prob.	
Study	pretest	186	25.9247	10.107	.741	1.30	.076	1.17	372	.244	1.17	364.82	.244	not signif.
Contrl	pretest	188	24.7766	8.872	.647									
Study	posttest	203	32.8768	10.144	.712	1.05	.764	.37	330	.711	.37	267.97	.713	not signif.
Contrl	posttest	129	32.4496	10.380	.914									

Group	Test	number of stds.	means	standrd deviatn	standrd error	mean differ.	st.devtn differ	st.error differ.	corr.	2-tail prob.	t-value	Deg. of freedm	2-tail prob.	remark
Study	pretest	184	25.9076	10.150	.748	-7.5435	6.616	.488	.782	.000	-15.47	183	.000	signif.
Study	posttest	184	33.4511	9.893	.729									
Contrl	pretest	117	24.8376	8.673	.802	-7.7949	6.031	.558	.804	.000	-13.98	116	.000	signif.
Contrl	posttest	117	32.6325	10.090	.933									

Table 5.13 T-test for level of significance of means' difference for Freshman English 101A performance of both groups (corpus study)

[27]The first part of the table (consisting of the first five rows) shows the *t-test* for the means' difference of the study and control groups in the pretest and post test. The items on the first row are number of students who took the test, means, standard deviations, standard errors, F-value, 2-tail prob., t-value, degrees of freedom, 2-tail prob. (the last three under pooled variance), t-value, degrees of freedom, 2-tail prob. (under separate variance estimate), and lastly, remark or *level of significance*.

The second part of the table (rows 7 to 11) indicates the paired samples t-test of the means' difference of each group during the pretest and the post test. The subheadings for this part (row 7) are number of students who took the test, means, standard deviations, standard errors, means' difference, standard deviation difference, standard error difference, corr., 2-tail probability, t-value, degrees of freedom, 2-tail probability, and remark or *level of significance*.

The means and standard deviations of the scores of the study (Table 5.13) (number = 186) and control (number = 188) groups in Freshman English 101A pretest are 25.9 and 10.1 (study), and 24.8 and 8.9 (control). The mean difference between the two groups is statistically not significant at p = 0.05. Hence, it can be assumed that the two groups have the same level of ability as assessed by the Freshman English 101A test.

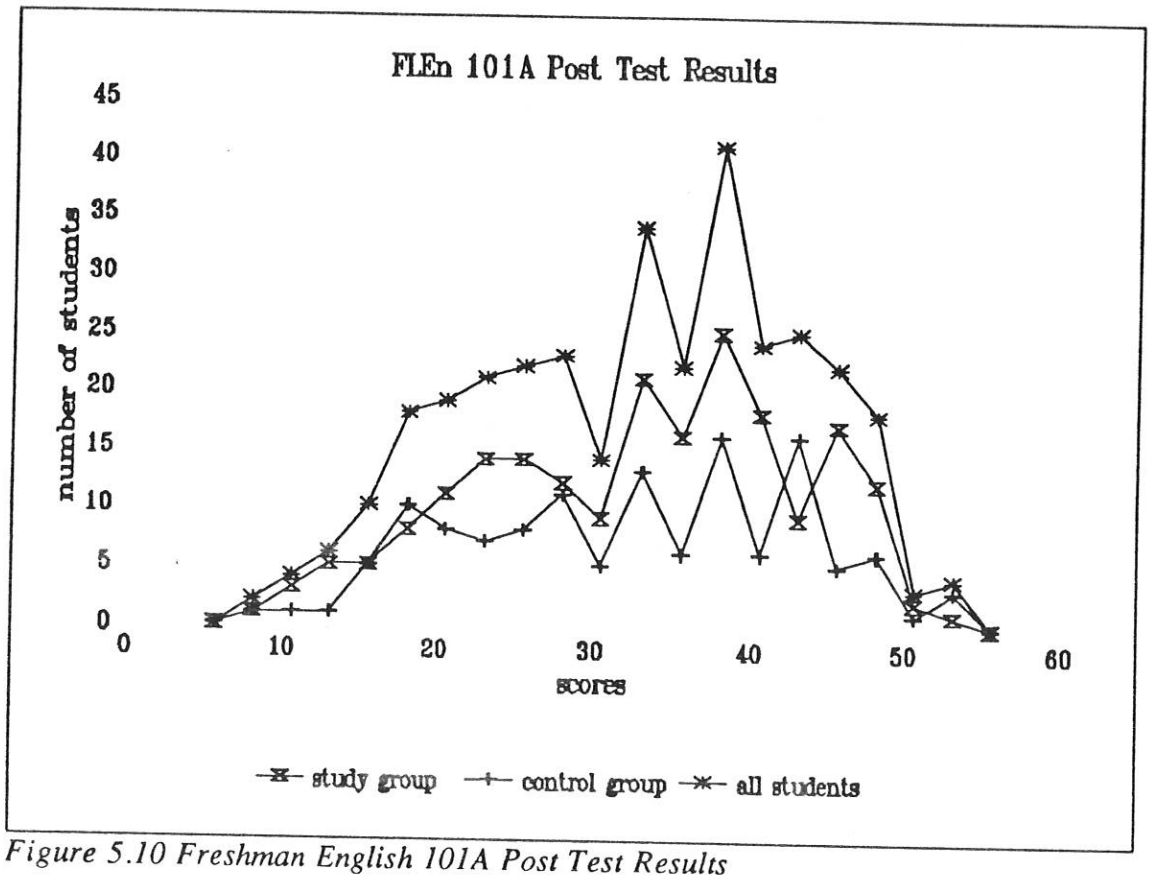

Figure 5.10 Freshman English 101A Post Test Results

In addition to the test in Freshman English 101A, the pretest package includes a test in Freshman English 101B - the second part of the first year service English courses. In general terms, this test is used to certify that a student who gets a pass in it is able to do most of his/her academic requirements without a serious linguistic constraint, that is, the successful student is assumed that he/she can read his/her academic course books without any problem, summarize and take notes from various references and lectures and produce at least a coherent paragraph in English (in order to take up the last in the series - Sophomore English - which is more or less a writing course). Thus, it can be assumed

that the demands of the Freshman English 101B test is relatively higher than that of Freshman English 101A.

A total of 357 students have taken the pretest on Freshman English 101B (Table 5.12). As indicated in Figure 10 above, the scores are out of 50. Conventionally, Freshman English 101B scores are interpreted in letter forms as indicated above (Table 5.12). It has been indicated that the cut-off points for Freshman English 101B scores follow the same pattern as those for Freshman English 101A. The usual difference is the cut-off points for ***F*** and ***D***. ***F*** is mostly 40 and below, and ***D*** is between 41 and 49. For the sake of convenience, however, the same cut-off points have been used for both tests to compile the data (***Appendix 7.2*** provides the entire ray of scores).

Accordingly, out of the 357 students, 8 per cent (30 students), 27 per cent (97 students), 19 per cent (67 students), and 45 per cent (162 students) of the students have scored ***B***, ***C***, ***D***, and ***F*** (Table 5.12). Apparently, the majority of the students have found the Freshman English 101B pretest more difficult than the Freshman English 101A pretest. However, about 35 per cent of the students have managed to get scores that would have enabled them to be certified as having taken the bulk of the requirement of the service English courses. They would have only been required to take the last part of the series for a single semester only. As it has been indicated above, the two sets of tests (a) might not really test what the service English courses are thought to be teaching, and (b) they may not be good indicators of students' progress in their linguistic ability (see section 2.6 where it is indicated that students who have already completed the three courses of service English, and passed the three tests, have been found incompetent to take down acceptable notes from their reading, that is, they seemed to be poor in their reading and linguistic abilities - in specific terms, they could not distinguish between main points and supporting details; see ***Appendix 1.2***).

Of course, one may ask why these tests have been selected for the study in order to qualify any linguistic improvement students may gain as a result of the proposed approach to reading instruction if they are claimed to be deficient. Firstly, the tests indicate official requirements. Whether they are deficient or not, teachers and students work towards

Group [28]	Test	number of stds.	means	standrd deviatn	standrd error	F-val	2-tail prob.	Pooled Variance Estimate			Separate Variance Estimate			remark
								t-value	Deg. of freedm	2-tail prob.	t-value	Deg. of freedm	2-tail prob.	
Study	pretest	175	20.3886	11.146	.843	1.20	.217	1.18	355	.240	1.18	348.95	.241	not signif.
Contrl	pretest	182	19.0604	10.158	.753									
Study	posttest	182	23.0385	9.029	.669	1.23	.226	.09	305	.932	.09	283.14	.930	not signif.
Contrl	posttest	125	22.9520	8.157	.730									

Group	Test	number of stds.	means	standrd deviatn	standrd error	mean differ.	st.devt ndiffe r	st.error differ.	corr.	2-tail prob.	t-value	Deg. of freedm	2-tail prob.	remark
Study	pretest	154	20.6104	11.161	.899	-3.1623	7.384	.595	.753	.000	-5.31	153	.000	signif.
Study	posttest	154	23.7727	9.195	.741									
Contrl	pretest	116	19.5862	10.299	.956	-3.6034	6.477	.601	.778	.000	-5.99	115	.000	signif.
Contrl	posttest	116	23.1897	8.270	.768									

Table 5.14 T-test for level of significance of means' difference for Freshman English 101B performance of both groups (corpus study)

[28]The first part of the table (consisting of the first five rows) indicates the *t-test* for the means' difference of the study and control groups in the pretest and post test. The items on the first row are number of students who took the test, means, standard deviations, standard errors, F-value, 2-tail prob., t-value, degrees of freedom, 2-tail prob. (the last three under pooled variance), t-value, degrees of freedom, 2-tail prob. (under separate variance estimate), and lastly, remark or *level of significance.*

The second part of the table (rows 7 to 11) indicates the paired samples t-test of the means' difference of each group during the pretest and the post test. The subheadings for this part (row 7) are number of students who took the test, means, standard deviations, standard errors, means' difference, standard deviation difference, standard error difference, corr., 2-tail probability, t-value, degrees of freedom, 2-tail probability, and remark or *level of significance.*

achieving the requirements set by these tests. This attitude has been taken as a significant factor constraining the nature of the service English language classroom at the first year level (section 4.1 Chapter 4 for teachers and students' attitude). For most students, they take the Freshman English courses to meet the academic requirement -to pass the tests. And, most teachers train their students to pass the tests. Secondly, despite their deficiencies, the tests can be used as indicative, as guide line, locally produced and meant for students whose linguistic abilities could be imagined. In other words, they are not remote tests for remote students despite their deficiencies.

As indicated in Table 5.12, out of the 357 students, 175 and 182 belong to the study and control groups respectively. Figure 5.10 shows that about 1 per cent (1 student), 12 per cent (22 students), 24 per cent (42 students), 22 per cent (38 students), and 41 per cent (72 students) of the students in the study group have scored ***A***, ***B***, ***C***, ***D***, and ***F*** respectively. In the control group, 4 per cent (8 students), 30 per cent (55 students), 16 per cent (29 students), and 49 per cent (90 students) of the students score ***B***, ***C***, ***D*** and ***F*** respectively. It is evident that this test is more difficult than the Freshman English 101A test. Despite this, about 46 per cent of the study group and 34 per cent of the control group have managed to pass the test.

The above description, however, does not indicate whether the two groups have the same level of ability or not. The major objective of the pretest is, as noted before, to establish that the two groups have similar levels of linguistic ability as measured by the particular test. As it is indicated in Table 5.14, the t-statistic of the scores displays that the means and standard deviations of the study and control groups in the Freshman English 101B pretest are 20.388 and 11.146 (study) and 19.060 and 10.158 (control). Apparently, the difference between the two means is indicated as not significant. Hence, the two groups can be taken to belong to the same population.

As mentioned above, at the end of the first semester of the 1990 - 1991, both groups took the post test package which included Freshman English 101A and Freshman English 101B tests. Table 5.12 above indicates the summary of the results of both tests. A total of 332 and 307 students belonging to the study and control groups have taken Freshman English

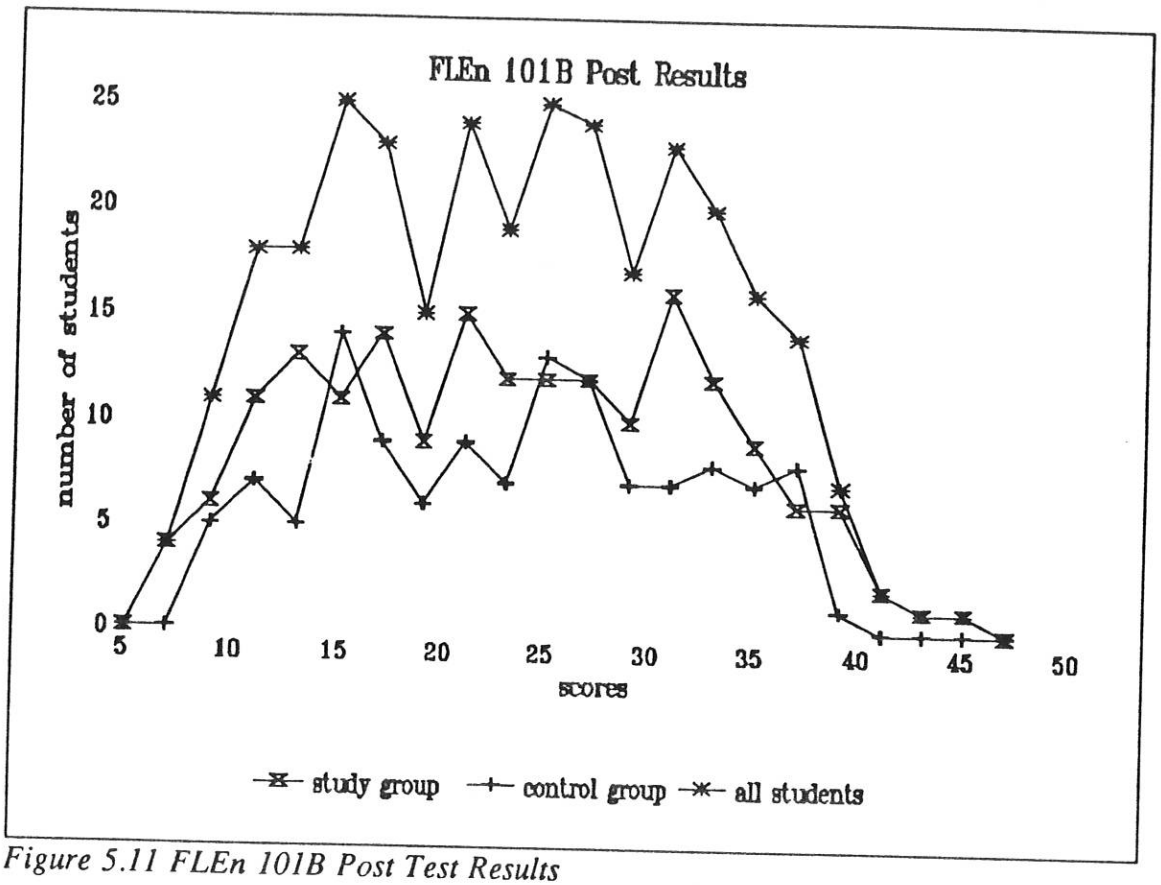

Figure 5.11 FLEn 101B Post Test Results

101A and Freshman English 101B respectively.

If the above suggested cut-off points for both courses are taken (Table 5.12), as indicated in Figure 5.10 above, about 8 per cent (25 students), 25 per cent (84 students), 36 per cent (121 students), 19 per cent (62 students) and 12 per cent (40 students) of the students have scored ***A***, ***B***, ***C***, ***D***, and ***F*** respectively in the Freshman English 101A post test. In the study group, 7 per cent (15 students), 24 per cent (50 students), 38 per cent (77 students), 19 per cent (39 students), and 11 per cent (22 students) of the students have scored ***A***, ***B***, ***C***, ***D***, and ***F*** respectively. In the control group, 8 per cent (10 students), 26 per cent (34 students), 34 per cent (44 students), 18 per cent (23 students), and 14 per cent (18 students) of the students have scores of ***A***, ***B***, ***C***, ***D***, and ***F*** respectively.

Moreover, about 1 per cent (2 students), 7 per cent (23 students), 37 per cent (114 students), 22 per cent (69 students), and 32 per cent (99 students) of the students have earned ***A***, ***B***, ***C***, ***D***, and ***F*** respectively in Freshman English 101B. Accordingly, in the

study group, about 1 per cent (2 students), 8 per cent (14 students), 36 per cent (65 students), 23 per cent (42 students), and 32 per cent (59 students) have scored ***A***, ***B***, ***C***, ***D***, and ***F*** respectively. In the control group, 7 per cent (9 students), 39 per cent (49 students), 22 per cent (27 students), and 32 per cent (40 students) have scored ***B***, ***C***, ***D***, and ***F*** respectively (Table 5.12).

As indicated in Table 5.13, the Freshman English 101A post test scores of the study and control groups have yielded the following means and standard deviations: 32.8 and 10.14 (study), and 32.44 and 10.38 (control). Ostensibly, the two means are almost the same, and thus, it cannot be claimed that one group has done better than the other. An investigation of the difference in performance of the study group between Freshman English 101A pretest and post test (Table 5.13) reveals that the means and standard deviations of the scores in the two tests are 25.90 and 10.15 (pretest), and 33.45 and 9.89 (post test). The difference between the two means is statistically significant at $p < 0.05$. Hence, it can be concluded that the study group have performed significantly better in the Freshman English 101A post test than in the pretest.

However, such an improvement can only be attributed to the approach employed in the study groups if it is established that the control group have not performed better in the post test than in the pretest. It is portrayed above that there is no significant difference between the means of the study and control groups in the Freshman English 101A post test. The paired samples t-test of the Freshman English 101A pretest and post test of the control group (Table 5.13) indicates the following: the means and standard deviations of the two tests are 24.8376 and 8.67 (pretest), and 32.6325 and 10.09 (post test). There is a significant difference between the two means, and it is indicated that the control group have done better in the post test than in the pretest. Thus, it may be difficult to attribute the linguistic improvement displayed by the study group exclusively to the approach used with this group. However, it may be appropriate to assume that the approach is at least as effective, if not better than, the conventional one used with the control group. All other things being constant, the study group have proved to be as competent as the control group in a test believed to be solely guided by the contents of the Freshman English 101A course book in a relatively the same period of time. However, it cannot be claimed that

the study group have performed better than the control group in this particular test. What the approach seems to have provided the students with is the ability to tackle a language test that is claimed to be mainly biased towards the contents of the Freshman English course book. It is to be noted that students have not had any formal instruction specifically based on the Freshman English course book. They seemed to manage doing that by themselves quite with ease.

The Freshman English 101B post test results (Table 5.14) indicate that the means and standard deviations of the study and control groups are 23.038 and 9.029 (study), and 22.952 and 8.157 (control). The t-test of the significance of the difference between means reveals that the two means are not significantly different. In other words, no group have performed better than the other in the Freshman English 101B post test. A paired samples t-test of the means (means = 20.61 and 23.77; standard deviation 11.16 and 9.19 respectively) of the study group in the Freshman English 101B pretest and post test shows that the difference between the means is statistically significant at $p < 0.05$. Similarly, the paired samples t-test of the means (means = 19.58 and 23.18; standard deviation 10.29 and 8.27 respectively) of the control group indicates that the difference between the means is statistically significant at $p < 0.05$. Thus, though it can be asserted that both have improved in their performance in Freshman English 101B, the compiled data is no sufficient to argue that the study group have performed better than the control group as a result of the approach pursued. But it should be emphasized that the study group have not lagged behind the control group as was feared otherwise by the statements of the students discussed in section 5.31 above (see also for comments about the study group in section 4.1 Chapter 4).

Finally, the scores of the students in the first semester Freshman English 101A examination in 1990-91 academic year are taken into consideration for assessing the effects of the reading approach this study is concerned with (Table 5.14). The scores of 382 first year students are compiled for the comparison. Out of the 382 students, 207 and 175 students belong to the study and control groups respectively. As indicated in Figure 5.12 above, if the above suggested cut-off points for Freshman English 101A are employed, about 10 per cent (39 students), 36 per cent (138 students), 37 per cent (141

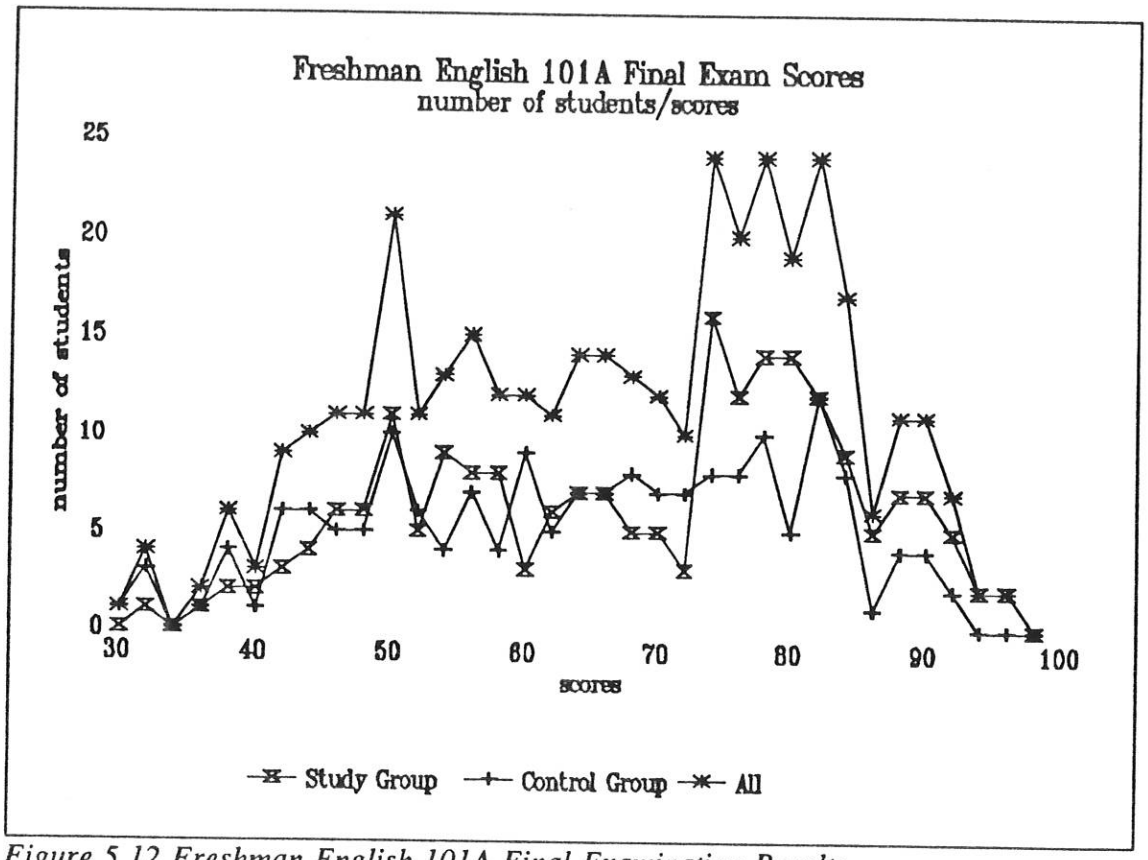

Figure 5.12 Freshman English 101A Final Examination Results

students), 15 per cent (57 students) and 2 per cent (6 students) of the students in both groups have scored ***A***, ***B***, ***C***, ***D***, and ***F*** respectively in the Freshman English 101A first semester final examination.

It may be essential to note how these letter grades distribute between the two groups. The scores of 207 students from the study group and 175 students from the control group have been compiled for the analysis. Out of the 207 students in the study group, as Figure 5.13 above shows, about 13 per cent (28 students), 38 per cent (80 students), 34 per cent (71 students), 12 per cent (26 students), and 1 per cent (2 students) of the students have earned ***A***, ***B***, ***C***, ***D***, and ***F*** respectively in the Freshman English 101A first semester examination. Similarly, out of the 175 students in the control group, 6 per cent (11 students), 33 per cent (58 students), 40 per cent (71 students), 18 per cent (31 students), and 2 per cent (4 students) of the students have scored ***A***, ***B***, ***C***, ***D***, and ***F*** respectively. On the surface, it looks that the study group have performed better than the control group in this test. In other words, the number of students in the study group who have scored

Group[29]	Test	number of cases	means	standrd deviatn	standrd error	F-val	2ail rob.	Pooled Variance Estimate			Separate Variance Estimate			remark
								t-value	Deg. of freedm	2-tail prob.	t-value	Deg. of freedm	2-tail prob.	
Study	posttest	207	68.2271	15.198	1.056	1.01	.955	2.63	380	.009	2.63	369.03	.009	signif.
Control	posttest	175	64.1143	15.256	1.153									

Table 5.15 T-test for level of significance of means' difference for Freshman English 101A final exam (corpus study)

[29]The above table indicates the *t-test* for the means' difference of the study and control groups' scores in the *first semester Freshman English 101A final examination* (which was given immediately after the end of the corpus study). The items on the first row are number of students who took the test, means, standard deviations, standard errors, F-value, 2-tail prob., t-value, degrees of freedom, 2-tail prob. (the last three under pooled variance estimate), t-value, degrees of freedom, 2-tail prob. (under separate variance estimate), and lastly, the remark or *level of significance.*

C and above is more than it is in the control group. However, this has to be statistically supported in order to claim that the study group have done better than the control group.

The t-test of the means of the study and control groups (Table 5.15) provides the following summary of the scores: the means and standard deviations of the scores of the study and control groups are respectively 68.2271 and 15.19 (study), and 64.1143 and 15.256 (control). The performances of 207 and 175 students from the study and control groups have been taken into consideration. The t-test of the above means indicates that the difference between the means of the study and control groups is statistically significant at $p < 0.05$. In other words, this indicates that the study group have performed significantly better than the control group in the Freshman English 101A first semester examination. This difference could be attributed to the approach the students have used to learn English. It can be claimed that the approach used has significantly helped students in the study group to perform better than the control group in the first semester Freshman English 101A final examination. This statistical evidence is also corroborated by the views of the instructors involved in the study. However, what remains dubious about the performance in these tests is the reason why such a difference could not be found out in the other Freshman English tests mentioned above. Could this be attributed to the irregularity of the levels of difficulty in the tests or, even more significant, to the attitudes of the students towards these tests?

5.4 Teachers' reports about the 'programme'

The study underscores the indispensable role of the teacher in promoting individualized reading. Through learner training the teacher helps the learner to be able to define his/her purpose of learning and the various ways of developing fluency in reading in English for academic purposes. As indicated in section 4.2 and section 4.3 Chapter 4 above, the instructor, as an experienced learner himself, guides learners towards understanding what learning is, organizes group work and checks its effectiveness, provides appropriate help to those who need it (such as monitoring one's progress in learning) (see for instance ***str. 3.1216b, str. 3.1260, str. 3.1262a, str. 3.1267, str. 3.1288, str. 3.12, Appendix 3.12***) and aids in developing students' confidence in their learning. The present study does not

neglect the crucial role of teachers in generating learner autonomy. However, it is based on the view, as Maley (1986:89) has pointed out, that teachers cannot be taken as 'possessing sacrosanct knowledge, which they dispense in daily doses to their docile flock.'

The instructors involved in the study have also pointed out certain essential aspects of their experience in the individualized reading programme. All of them state that because of their eagerness to see the outcome of the *experiment*, that is, whether it would work or not, they have taken it as their own task (not trying someone's prescriptions). One instructor claims "...I took it as my own because I was convinced that my students were benefitting a lot from the experimental study" (***ins. 3.211, Appendix 3.2***). Another factor that seems to have enhanced this involvement is the practice of "inculcating individual responsibility [for one's own learning]... as well as [giving] the opportunity for extensive reading" (***ins. 3.222, Appendix 3.2***). All the instructors mention this as an aspect of the programme that makes it interesting and rewarding. In general terms, the issues raised by the instructors can be summarized under the following themes: appropriacy and applicability of the programme, student observations, instructor's attitudinal change, and major recommendations.

5.41 Aspects of appropriacy and applicability of individualized reading

All instructors believe that the approach is suitable for bridging the gap between students' reading ability and the reading requirements of their academic courses. As one instructor states, "...reading is a skill that is developed through reading and exposure to a variety of exercises as in the study. This, I think, will help them [students] in tackling any reading task" (***ins. 3.238, Appendix 3.2***). Another instructor states that individualized reading can narrow "the gap between students' reading ability and the academic requirements because it helps students to develop their comprehension easily; increases the size of their vocabulary and equips them with better techniques of reading" (***ins. 3.218, Appendix 3.2***). While all the instructors share the view that individualized reading promotes the major objective of the service English courses, that is, "to enable students to read and understand the texts they will be required to read for the different courses at the university" (*ins.*

3.248, Appendix 3.2), they mention time as a constraining factor. In other words, as one instructor indicates,

> One difficulty was that the participants did not have time to share their experiences of the lab when they went to their usual classroom. This could have helped them to develop more interest and to feel more responsible for the lab work (*ins. 3.233, Appendix 3.2*).

However, as one instructor argues, the programme "had to fit into the unit timing (schedule)" (*ins. 3.22, Appendix 3.12*). The 'unit timing' refers to the time allowed to teach each of the selected units in the course book suggested by the co-ordinator of Freshman English course. This might indicate the attempt made by instructors to reconcile the two different approaches - that is, individualized reading and the approach used in Freshman English course book.

5.42 Student observations

The instructors involved in the study mention at least three major aspects in their observations about their students learning through individualized reading - common reading strategies before and after the study, anticipated success or even failure in learning to read in English for academic purposes through individualized reading, and their students' reactions to individualized reading. One instructor reports that

> at the beginning the students were counting words in isolation rather than reading them in sense groups. They did not know how to skim over a reading passage to extract the necessary information. They rather read all the words and sentences equally without making any discrimination based on their importance (*ins. 3.219, Appendix 3.12*).

This might sound a bit exaggerated when one looks at the student responses to the metacognitive questionnaire analyzed above (section 5.3113, Chapter 5). However, another instructor adds that, "when students read, they struggle with language bits, mainly vocabulary items rather than getting the ideas in the parts or the whole of the text which they read" (*ins. 3.239, Appendix 3.2*). One instructor feels that "towards the end of the study they [students] managed to read faster with improved comprehension" (*ins. 3.229, Appendix 3.12*).

The instructors are divided in their opinion regarding their students' attitude towards individualized reading. One states that it is difficult to determine (***ins. 3.2210, Appendix 3.2***), and another comments that

> it is difficult to say what they felt at the early stages of the study although there was no lack of interest in the lab work through out the semester. Of course, there was also the one-hour class work which raised their confidence about passing their examination (***ins. 3.2310, Appendix 3.2***).

Most of them, however, indicate observable positive changes in students' attitudes towards individualized reading, and as one instructor reports,

> at the beginning, there was some doubt in most of them, but in the end the majority enjoyed the work. I even noticed that many regretted that they were not able to continue with the experiment during semester 2 (***ins. 3.2410, Appendix 3.2***).

Another instructor points out that "at the beginning the students didn't believe at all that they were going to benefit anything out of the experiment but at the end, they were happy to see that they were benefiting a lot from the study" (***ins. 3.2112, Appendix 3.12***).

5.43 Instructors' attitudes to individualized reading in English

It would be stating an obvious paradigm to indicate that the attitudes of the *consumers* (teachers and students), among other things, determine the success or failure of a recommended approach. As indicated in section 4.1 Chapter 4 above, the current approach could only be implemented through negotiation with both teachers and students. It has been underscored that the instructors involved in the study are the ones who are willing to try new ideas and to convince their respective students to *try* or *experiment* with a different approach to learning to read in English for academic purposes.

Although one instructor reports that, owing to the limited duration of the programme, he/she feels no significant attitudinal change (***ins. 3.224, Appendix 3.2***), the rest indicate that they are now convinced that the approach used is effective in developing the ability

to read in English. Most of them express the view that the programme has the following merits:

> a) students worked on their own and progressed at their own pace. b) Students had the opportunity to see and evaluate their own progress. c) They were exposed to a variety of skills which they certainly need for their academic reading (***ins. 3.235, Appendix 3.2***).

One instructor mentions that the programme provides "more exposure to reading materials; more exercise in comprehension and speed" and takes into consideration the importance of "individual ability (background knowledge)" (***ins. 3.225, Appendix 3.2***). While two instructors express the view that "I had some fear whether my students were going to pass the examination at the beginning, but after some time it became clear to me that they were going to pass the examination" (***ins. 3.2111, Appendix 3.2***), the rest imply that "I never felt that they would not pass their exam because I felt they would really benefit from the procedure, which I think is much better than the practice we are following" (***ins. 3.2311, Appendix 3.2***).

5.44 Instructors' recommendations

Almost all the instructors report that their students in the study groups are doing better than those in the control groups. One instructor reports that "the results of the students who were in the study group were extremely higher than those who were in the control group" (***ins. 3.2114, Appendix 3.2***). Another states that "... the results of the study group proved to be more clustered and even better than the control group" (***ins. 3.2214, Appendix 3.2***, see section 5.323 above for comparison).

Generally, the instructors recommend that the procedures of individualized reading should be introduced to the general staff, and means of integrating individualized reading in English for academic purposes into the current service English course should be sought. One instructor expresses that

> I believe, it would be useful if a seminar can be organized to brief our teaching staff about the usefulness of the methodology applied during the study. The participant instructors can take part in the discussion. This could lead to the

application of the methodology in the Department eventually (***ins. 3.2115, Appendix 3.2***).

Similarly, one of the instructors reports that "the methodology has much to offer for our students. Only ways of integrating it into the existing system should be sought" (***ins. 3.2314, Appendix 3.2***).

5.5 Conclusion

The fundamental motive for suggesting a possible approach to learning to read in English for academic purposes at the first year level of the College of Social Sciences, Addis Ababa University, is to bridge the gap between students' reading ability level and the readability of their course books. The situation at the first year level is similar to the one described by Elley (1984:285) about students in the University of the South Pacific, Fiji:

> By the time they reach university, the surviving students are still struggling with what must be largely meaningless English prose in their texts and reading assignments. By their own admission, many students are out of their depth in coping with English as a second language.

Research confirms that most of the first year students in the College of Social Sciences find it difficult to cope with the linguistic and reading demands of their courses. This seriously affects their academic performance (section 2.6 Chapter 2). The crux of this problem lies in the students' lack of appropriate background knowledge (both schematic and systemic) to operate effectively as university students. As indicated above, the prerequisites for effective reading are the knowledge of the world, the reading process and the English language (Smith 1982). Ostensibly, a deficiency in one of these may impair reading comprehension. Research in second or foreign language reading suggests that one way of tackling this problem is defining it in its right perspective, that is, determining whether it is a linguistic or a reading problem (Alderson 1984), so that appropriate techniques could be developed to help students tackle either problem. The other assumption is appropriate techniques could be devised to tackle both and one should not be separated from the other though at the lower levels reading is parasitic onlinguistic knowledge (Swaffar and others 1990). The current study is based on the assumption that,

at least at the tertiary level, the bulk of the work of the students is reading their academic course books in English. As a result of this, it is essential to design and try a possible approach to developing the students' reading ability in English for academic purposes. As has been pointed out above individualised reading in English for academic purposes as an approach is in line with the major educational objectives of the university; that is, it promotes independent learning and learning through discovery (section 2.7 Chapter 2). By individualizing reading instruction, it is assumed that major learning problems due to learner differences could be effectively be addressed. Learners could exploit their prior knowledge, however deficient it might be, develop it not only to bridge the gap between their reading ability and the readability of their course books, but also to operate as university students. Moreover, it is assumed that learners would learn effectively if they get the proper training to take the responsibility for their learning (Dickinson 1987).

Based on these assumptions, the possible approach to learning to read in English for academic purposes is designed as specified in section 4.2 and section 4.3 Chapter 4. It is indicated in the preceding chapter that the study of the effectiveness of the approach is based on two stages: the pilot and the corpus. Each stage has taken a semester - mainly from February to June (1990) and from September to January (1990 - 1991) respectively. This chapter has provided the analysis of the results of the study.

It has been indicated above (section 5.21) that the students in the pilot study have found the ***ELSIP*** materials interesting and useful. In general terms, they state that the graded materials are easy to read and they are useful in providing the appropriate reading experience. Moreover, they report that the approach employed to learn to read in English is helpful and commendable. The investigation of the common reading strategies employed by the students indicates that most of them take notes, such as new vocabulary items, while reading. They say that they look for general ideas when they read. However, the results of the survey of the students' reports about their preferred reading strategies are inconclusive.

The results of the reading comprehension tests indicate that at the beginning of the experiment, the study and control groups have similar levels of reading ability. At the

end of the study, it is established that the students have not made a significant improvement in their reading ability. In fact, it is indicated that both groups have performed lower in the post test than in the pretest. It seems that the difference in approach has not resulted in a difference in reading performance.

As summarized in section 5.222 above, the comparison of the results of the readability pretests and post tests of the study group portrays that the students have significantly achieved lower in the post test than in the pretest in history, philosophy and economics. Their performance in geography remains relatively the same. However, it is indicated that most students in the two groups are in the *frustrational* level in geography. Apparently, there is no conclusive evidence from the readability test results to assert that the students in the study group have been helped substantially by the approach employed to enhance their reading ability in English so that they could read their academic course books as efficiently as desirable. What this study found as dubious is the effectiveness of the cloze procedure as a tool in measuring the improvement students have made in their reading. It seems illogical to find out that the scores for the cloze post test are relatively lower than those for the pretest. Could it be assumed that the students have lost what they had at the beginning at the end of the study? Admittedly, their performance in the cloze tests could be affected by their attitudes towards the relevance of these tests to their academic study, and possibly due to the constraints of the cloze procedure itself (section 3.2221 Chapter 3).

The students in the pilot study have also taken general English language ability tests. As indicated in section 5.223 above, the test consists of Freshman English 101A and Freshman English 101B. The pretest and post test results of Freshman English 101A depict that although there is no significant difference between the means of the study and control groups in the post test, it has been found out while the control group have not improved in the post test, the study group have significantly performed better in the post test than in the pretest of the Freshman English 101A. This may be attributed to the effectiveness of the approach used with the study group. The results of the Freshman English 101B of the two groups indicate that both of them have performed better in the post test than in the pretest. However, it is calculated that there is no significant

difference between the means of the two groups in the Freshman English 101B post test. Hence, there is no statistical evidence to assert that during the pilot study individualized reading for English for academic purposes have helped the study group to perform better than the control group in Freshman English 101B test. The results in the post test, however, indicate significant progress of the study group.

The main study conducted in the first semester of the academic year 1990-91 involves a maximum of 420 students and more than six instructors. As indicated in section 5.3 above, missing cases - those students who have not taken a particular test for various reasons - have been excluded from the computations. This is why the numbers of students (cases) vary from one test to another. In other words, the maximum number of students taking a particular test is 210 in each group. However, as it has been indicated above, this figure has gone as low as 125 in the control group.

Like in the pilot study, the students in the main study report that they have found the *SRA* materials relevant to the learning of the service English language and other academic courses. A few mention the exercises in the materials are very helpful in developing one's reading ability. Despite the fact that some are apprehensive, because of the fact that they are not made to use the service English course book, most admit that the approach has helped them to improve in their reading skill, speed and vocabulary. In fact, they state that they have learned effective methods of tackling reading comprehension questions.

It has been mentioned above (section 5.4) that the instructors involved in the trailing of the proposed approach to reading instruction have reported that the approach is both feasible and effective. They say that they have taken the task as their own and they could see the virtues and flaws of the approach. They share the view that the approach can help in bridging the gap between students' reading ability and the readability of their course books. The instructors confirm that their students have improved in their reading skills and speed significantly since the beginning of the study. They also report that they have assumed positive attitudinal changes towards the approach. They assert that their students in the study group have performed better than their students in the control group. Of

course, this has to be corroborated by the results of the tests on reading comprehension, readability and general English language ability.

Besides this, the effectiveness of the approach to reading instruction has been appraised by capitalizing on the following three aspects of reading for academic purposes: investigating the effectiveness of the approach in helping students adopt effective reading strategies (assessed by using a metacognitive questionnaire), measuring the general improvement in reading comprehension (reading comprehension tests), finding out whether the readability levels of the course books have decreased significantly - thus confirming that the alleged gap has been bridged (cloze tests), and investigating the general linguistic improvement (Freshman English 101A and Freshman English 101B).

In general terms, the questionnaire (administered at the beginning and end of the study), reveals that most students have become more cautious in their responses to the statements. In other words, at the beginning of the study, the responses of students are relatively positive to all items. At the end of the study, the students become more selective as is indicated by the distribution of the number of responses among the five levels of agreement. The numbers do not pile up on a single level for all items. As summarized in section 5.3113, it can be assumed that there is a change of attitude towards the reading process, and students seem to favour reading strategies such as *focusing on the difference between main points and supporting details*, *continuing reading and hope for clarification later on* (when faced with some reading difficulty), *using background knowledge* and *details of content.* They also indicate that they can become effective readers if they read intensively and extensively.

The reading comprehension test results indicate that at the end of the study, the study group have significantly improved their reading comprehension ability. They have performed better than the control group in the reading comprehension post test. This significant improvement is suggested as attributable to the approach used in the study group. However, the readability test results are not as conclusive as the former. Though there is an improvement in the results of the study group in the geography cloze post test, the control group exhibit similar improvement. Similarly, the performance in the history

cloze test, although the study group perform better than the control group, the difference cannot be statistically proved to be significant. It is pointed out that the control group have performed lower in the history cloze post test than in the pretest.

The last parameter used to assess the effectiveness of the approach is the Freshman English 101A and Freshman English 101B test package. This package has been employed to investigate any linguistic improvement made by the study group since the beginning of the study. In the Freshman English 101A, although both groups have been proved to have shown an improvement in their linguistic ability, it seems that there is no significant difference in performance between the study and control groups. Similarly, in the Freshman English 101B test, it cannot be proved that the study group have performed better than the control group, though, as indicated above for Freshman English 101A, the two groups have significantly improved at the end of the study. Lastly, the official Freshman English 101A final examination results are taken to determine the effectiveness of the approach. The analysis of the results of both groups indicates that the study group have performed significantly better than the control group in this examination. This may be attributed to the effectiveness of the approach employed by the study group. In a nut-shell, the approach has been accepted by the teachers and students alike involved to be feasible and effective in generating positive attitudes towards and establishing appropriate learning strategies to learning to read in English for academic purposes. It has also helped students to improve their reading and linguistic abilities. But it seems that the alleged *gap* cannot be bridged by only a semester's work with this approach. More time might be needed to compile data that can be statistically established as indicating major changes in students' schematic and systemic knowledge that can help bridge the gap between their reading ability and the readability levels of their course books.

CHAPTER SIX

Conclusions

6.1 Summary

The major objective of the service English courses in Addis Ababa University is to help students improve their linguistic ability so that they could efficiently pursue their academic courses in English. Though it is not explicitly underlined, it is believed that the courses are intended (a) to be remedial in nature, that is, to help learners revise the knowledge of the English language they are believed to have learnt at school(Jarvis 1969; Conroy 1985), (b) to give advanced language work appropriate for higher education, and (c) to equip learners with language skills, such as, summarizing, note-taking, and report writing. In short, the service English courses at the university are meant to bridge the gap between the students' prior knowledge and the academic requirements of the university. According to the present syllabus of the courses, the 'critical mass of knowledge' necessary to bridge this gap has been qualified as follows: firstly, the grammar of the English language, and as such, a brief glossary of selected aspects of usage; secondly, a few reading passages that are very long with exercises that may not help students to develop desirable reading skills and strategies; and lastly, few writing exercises that are mostly unrelated to what the students are supposed to do in their academic courses. Recent findings indicate that the service English courses at the university fall short of providing students with the essential mass of knowledge to enable them to be effective listeners and readers in English for academic purposes (to mention a few, Gebremedhin 1988; Haile Michael 1988; Hicks 1989) and, unfortunately, they tend to become a waste of manpower and resources (Mosback 1977).

There could be several reasons for the ineffectiveness of the service English courses. One of the most important, as indicated above, is the way the 'critical mass of knowledge' is defined and attempted to be taught. The qualification of this knowledge is not based on a disciplined assessment of the current students' prior knowledge or background

knowledge and the required knowledge to pursue higher education in the university, but on a former structuralist view of language teaching (see Madsen 1976, Jarvis 1969, Asfaw and Murrison-Bowie 1976) which stipulates that the teaching of usage (language descriptions or structural items) is essential for the mastery or learning of the language. The common assumption is that if learners master the structure of the language, they would be able to use their knowledge of the language to effectively communicate with it.

As indicated in section 2.3 Chapter 2, English language teachers recommended the teaching of the spoken rather than the written language to be given the priority, because, they felt that this was similar to the natural way of learning a language - first spoken and then written as children would learn their first language (Tesfaye and Taylor 1976). Thus, the teaching of reading in English for academic purposes was not given the proper emphasis. The state of the teaching of English in the Ethiopian schools has deteriorated since the late sixties and seventies (Stoddart 1986; McNab 1989), not only due to the controversial theoretical constructs informing the teaching of English as a foreign language in the country, but also due to the fact that since the imported western educational system could not bring about the much needed socio-cultural and economic development, the government was unable to increase its expenditure in education to cope with the expanding student population. In fact some researchers claim that the educational expenditure in Ethiopia is the lowest in East Africa and has kept on declining despite increased demands for schooling (Eshetu 1991). Major recommendations for educational reform could not be executed due to lack of finance and government commitment (Last 1983; Rogers 1967).

As McNab (1989) and Stoddart (1986) have stated, the government schools could only provide a half-day schooling, poor library facilities, little or no on job training for teachers, large classes, and in general no incentives that promote positive growth of the educational system. Apparently, this in turn has constrained the quality of the teaching of English in schools. Some would like to state that the English-medium schooling has contributed to the decline in the quality of education in countries like Ethiopia (Abbott 1989). However, it is contended here that there are far more significant factors, than the medium, that have constrained the educational system. The change from English-medium

schooling to,say, Amharic-medium schooling (as Stoddart 1986 suggested, and shared by many others such as Rogers 1989) may not necessarily bring about a drastic change in the quality of education.

It is noted that the Ethiopian educational system is highly centralized (McNab 1989; British Council 1986) and it has been mainly used to promote the centralization of political power and the training of skilled manpower for modern bureaucracy (Markakis 1974). Hence, the government has become almost the only major employer of school graduates, and the educational system has remained geared towards meeting this need (Gilkis 1975). As mentioned above, despite the various recommendations to reorient the educational system to serve basic societal needs (such as the recommendation to harmonize theory with practice in the teaching and learning process, the decentralization of the educational system, the use of local languages in primary education and other recommendations, such as those of the Education Sector Review mentioned in section 2.3 Chapter 2), socio-political exigencies have hindered their execution (Last 1983). In other words, much has not been done to relate the educational system to the socio-cultural and economic problems of the population.

Some researchers claim the pre-1974 educational system, in particular, because of the fact that it was imported and reflected Western social values, has resulted in some sort of alienation - the youth have become neither Ethiopian nor Western. The educated have been alienated from the Ethiopian tradition because of the imported educational system (Teshome, 1990; Girma 1992). Whether this claim can be sustained or not is not the major issue of the current study; however, it is essential to note here that the educational system has not addressed the fundamental socio-cultural and linguistic diversities that characterize the country. Thus, the issue of the relevance of the educational system to the basic needs of the country could be raised here. It might be argued that students do not find the educational system meaningful, and as a result, they may not be as motivated as desired to progress in their learning. As mentioned above, the other factor worth mentioning is because political exigencies have drained most of the country's resources, the expenditure on education has gradually decreased. This has resulted in poor quality of teaching, half-day schooling for most children, large classes with few or no text books,

poor school facilities and the like (Last 1983; section 2.3 Chapter 2; McNab 1989). It can be expected that the language classes are the most affected in this situation. McNab (1989) and Stoddart (1986) indicate that it has become almost impossible to teach subjects in English in the secondary schools; most resort to using Amharic. Hence this has seriously constrained the educational system to provide each learner with appropriate learning experience.

It is with such educational background and knowledge of the English language that students from the secondary schools, after having taken the ESLCE[1] and earned the required G.P.A.[2], join the Addis Ababa University. The service English courses are planned to help these students mainly to make up for their linguistic deficiencies. However, current research indicates that the service English courses are not as effective as they could be in helping students to acquire the 'critical mass of knowledge' necessary for enabling students to operate as university students (section 2.6 Chapter 2). It might not be contentious to add that the service English courses, as the most important courses that all Addis Ababa University first year entrants are required to take, should be designed in such a way that they do not only facilitate the learning of English but they also reorient students to learn how to learn - not only English, but also their other academic courses, thus creating a link between the learning of the language and the pursuit of their other the academic courses. It is argued that the service English courses could accomplish the following:

> Firstly, they could help students to make up for their linguistic deficiencies, not necessarily by qualifying these deficiencies for the students, but by training students to learn to identify their deficiencies by themselves and make up for them in a way each individual student is capable of doing, thus giving more prominence to individualised instruction and facilitating independent learning. The provision

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[1]Recently, most people involved in the conducting of this national examination have complained about the difficult task of checking cheating which is rampant in several examination centres.

[2]grade point average in five subjects. That is, currently, the letter grades for English and mathematics, subjects that a candidate has to pass in order to apply for higher education, and three other subjects that the student has managed to get better passing letter grades (C and above) than the rest, will be added up and divided by the number of subjects (that is, five) to give the grade point average of the scores.

of favourable learning opportunities would enable students to do away with ineffective learning strategies (such as overdependence on teachers) they acquired in their pre-university education, and learn appropriate ones. Higher education requires the learner to engage in independent work, and thus language classes can create a situation whereby the learner

> either alone or in a group decides *what* it is he [sic] wants to learn in the light of *why* he [sic] needs to learn, and then decides *how* he [sic] is going to tackle the problem. He [sic] may even use his [sic] own 'learning materials' to work upon in the form of authentic texts, and he [sic] will certainly choose his [sic] own course book if he [sic] has one. He [sic] takes the responsibility for learning upon himself [sic], and while he [sic] learns how to learn (or how not to !) (Geddes and Sturtridge 1982:2).

Apparently, the task of the teacher is to seek an approach that sets this process in motion. It is argued that a student can be claimed to have the knowledge of something if he/she is able to formulate experience in reference to given categories, and he/she achieves this through learning or engaging in the process of such formulation (Widdowson 1990:5). This engagement cannot solely be fostered by a rigid teaching methodology. Flexible teaching aims at enhancing the process of engagement. It is claimed that the language teacher has the responsibility to foster autonomy. One way of doing this is through learner training. Learner training is conceived as sets of "procedures or activities which raise learners' awareness of what is involved in the process of learning a second language, which encourage learners to become more involved in and responsible for their own learning, and which help learners to develop and strengthen their strategies for language learning" (*ELT Journal* 1993:92).

Secondly, the service English courses could become more effective and meaningful if the teaching and learning process could allow for individual differences in the use of prior knowledge, learning style and strategies, learning purpose and motivation. Researchers confirm that learners "bring with them their whole experience of learning and of life, along with their own reasons for being there, and their own particular needs that they hope to see satisfied" (Allwright and

Bailey 1991:18). Needless to say, this mass of prior knowledge differs from individual to individual. As Dickinson (1987) points out, learners also indicate differences in cognitive style (the overall approach to learning), cognitive strategy (learners' approach to specific types of task), and learning strategy (the actual activities and techniques which lead to learning), and, not to say the least, the differences in experiences due to the socio-cultural and linguistic background discussed in section 2.2 Chapter 2 above). Researchers in the psychology of learning confirm that learners can be typed according to their cognitive styles and strategies. Wilson (1981) identifies field-dependents (those who prefer a step by step approach or structured materials for learning) and field-independents (those who favour more global learning activities). Entwistle (1981) has found out that some learners prefer holistic learning (focusing on broad relations and forming hypotheses about generalizations) and others favour serialist learning (focusing on narrower relations and forming specific hypotheses). Similarly, Wilson (1981) claims that some learners are syllabus-bound (those that prefer to learn only those items they are required to learn - which has explicitly been indicated in the responses of the students discussed in section 5.21 and section 5.31 Chapter 5 above; ***Appendix 3.11*** and ***Appendix 3.12***) and syllabus-free (those that prefer to be involved in following up their own ideas and view the syllabus as restrictive). Elsewhere, it has been indicated that one major problem in conducting the study was convincing those concerned that the approach recommended did not exclude the official syllabus. The rationale for the approach is "any group of learners will manifest several differences in the preferred ways of going about learning tasks, and that learning is unlikely to be most efficient if the learner is prevented from learning in the ways she prefers" (Dickinson 1987:22-23). This calls for the adoption of a flexible approach in teaching and the provision of materials that allow learners to learn the way they prefer the most.

Thirdly, the service English courses could provide as much learning opportunities as possible if they do not limit students to the official course books (and specially, when it comes to the reading instruction part). Eskey and Grabe (1988) and Nuttal (1982) have indicated that students learn to read by reading, not by

extensive explanations about reading. In other words, the quantity and quality of reading is crucial for success in second or foreign language reading.

As indicated above, the service English courses are mainly designed to teach the structure of the English language (Conroy 1985). Current research cited above (section 2.6 Chapter 2) confirms that the courses have not been effective in providing first year university entrants with the essential mass of knowledge (which includes appropriate learning strategies) required for the pursuit of higher education.

It has been emphasised that an area of special interest in the service English courses is reading in English for academic purposes. In fact, one fundamental purpose of the service English courses is to enable students to read in English for academic purposes as efficiently as they could. It has been indicated above that the service English courses do not pay much attention to help learners read their academic courses in English. Despite the fact that researchers in second language reading emphasise the cardinal role reading plays in higher education in English medium universities (Carrell 1988a), the service English courses in the university do not provide students with adequate exposure to reading that encourages learners to learn to read in a way they prefer according to their needs, wants and lacks, and become self-directed (Geddes and Sturtridge 1982).

One of the most researched area in applied linguistics is reading in a second or foreign language for academic purposes. As indicated in section 3.2 above, research in reading followed two major trends: the study of theoretical constructs that underpin the process of reading and learning to read in a first language, and the investigation of the process of second or foreign language reading and reading instruction in a second or foreign language. One of the most influential views on L1 reading is Goodman's. Goodman (1988:11) states that "my effort has been to create a model of the reading process powerful enough to explain and predict reading behaviour and sound enough to be a base on which to build and examine the effectiveness of the reading instruction." Goodman's (1976) and Smith's (1982) theory of the L1 reading process, characterised as the top-down or concept driven model of reading, in general terms, stipulates that reading is a psycholinguistic guessing game whereby the reader is engaged in making predictions and

confirming these by utilizing as little as possible clues from the given text. In other words, "we sample the text as necessary to confirm hypotheses" (Grabe 1988:57). Despite the fact that attempts were made to translate Goodman's theory of reading to reading instruction specially in ESL situations, some researchers argued that his theory lacked explicitness. As Eskey (1988:93) points out, the top-down models

> tend to emphasize such higher-level skills as the prediction of meaning by means of context clues or certain kinds of background knowledge at the expense of such lower-level skills as the rapid and accurate identification of lexical and grammatical forms. That is, in making the perfectly valid point that fluent reading is primarily a cognitive process, they tend to *de*emphasize the perceptual and decoding dimensions of that process. The model they promote is an accurate model of the skilful, fluent reader, for whom perception and decoding have become automatic, but for the less proficient, developing reader - like most second language readers[3] this model does not provide a true picture of the problems such readers must surmount.

Grabe (1991) states that there are at least two major research approaches to reading. The first approach refers to those studies that investigate the different component skills of reading. These studies in reading investigate automatic recognition skills, vocabulary and structural knowledge, formal discourse structure knowledge, content/world background knowledge, synthesis and evaluation skills/strategies, and metacognitive knowledge and skills monitoring. Each domain is a useful approach to the study of the reading process "to the extent that such an approach leads to important insights into the reading process" (Grabe 1991:382). The second approach interprets the reading process "by means of simple controlling metaphors" (Grabe 1991:383) - the bottom-up (emphasis on textual decoding), top-down (emphasis on reader interpretation and prior knowledge), and interacting processing. It has been shown that current research confirms that reading is an interactive process

> whereby low-level 'bottom-up' processes involving the physical text on the page, such as letter and word recognition, interact with higher-level 'top-down' processes such as prior knowledge of text-type, or topic. [This approach also confirms that] deficiencies at one level may be compensated for by proficiencies at another (Moran and Williams 1993:65).

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[3]It is also believed that the models do not describe reading in EFL situations.

Based on these theoretical stipulations, the current study is designed to explore the effectiveness of individualised reading in English for academic purposes as a possible approach to reading instruction at the first year level of the College of Social Science, Addis Ababa University. It is argued that first year students could develop their reading ability in English to help them cope with their academic studies if the reading instruction is designed in such a way that it (a) provides them with the 'critical mass of knowledge' (the essential systemic and schematic knowledge) and (b) allows each individual learner to learn how to learn, and encourages him/her to be self-directed in learning to read in English for academic purposes by helping him/her identify his/her needs and lacks.

Accordingly, an experiment[4] was conducted in order to investigate the effectiveness and accessibility of individualised reading as a possible approach to reading instruction in the service English courses in the university. The study was carried out in two stages: the pilot (in the second semester of the 1989-90 academic year), and the main (in the first semester of the 1990-91 academic year). Originally it was planned that while the pilot study would be limited to a semester, the main study was to be carried out in two semesters. The students from the social science first year level were selected and grouped into control and study (based on whether or not the particular section's Freshman English schedule does not clash with the Spoken English schedule, and whether or not the concerned instructor is willing to be involved in the study). The control group followed the conventional approach, that is, the instructors explained the linguistic items to be studied and practised and the students' major task was to follow the lectures (mainly on structural items) and do the exercises. This pattern was followed for three periods per week (or three hours per week). The study group used the following mode of study. The mode of study in the individualised reading scheme consisted of (a) two hours per week of individualised reading, and (b) one hour per week of group discussion. The individualised reading sessions fostered a situation whereby students selected (were helped

[4]I prefer to use *study* in place of *experiment* since, I think, the latter is associated with explicit behavioural predispositions that are more or less the *product* of the process rather than the *process* itself. Moreover, experimentation seems to be connected with the school of behaviourism that sees an overt link between stimulus and response.

to select) reading materials[5] (graded readers from the ***ELSIP*** - in the pilot; and reading cards from the ***SRA*** package - in the main study), read and assessed their performances (either in a form supplied by the teacher, as was done with the ***ELSIP***; or in the student's ***SRA*** workbook). Most of the work was left to the students,and instructors kept in touch with what each student was doing in each session by appraising each student's report indicated in his/her workbook. Most of the learner training activities were drawn from these sources. The group discussion sessions were mainly meant for learner training activities, sharing of learning experiences, and doing the structure and usage exercises in the English text book. The learning activities were also planned and handled by students, but when necessary, instructors, who often joined one group or another during the discussions, helped students in the planning of the time-table for the work.

This mode of learning was hypothesized to bring about a significant improvement in students' reading and linguistic ability. It was assumed that this improvement in reading ability would be indicated in performances in reading comprehension tests, cloze readability tests, and Freshman English tests. It would also manifest itself in positive changes in responses to a questionnaire on the reading process and reading strategies.

6.11 The pilot study

During the pilot study most students approved of the recommended approach and reported that the approach was the best way for them to improve both their reading and linguistic ability. They stated that they liked the ***ELSIP*** reading collection because, according to the students, they contained interesting stories which were written in clear language.

However, the comparison between the reading comprehension pretest and post test results of the pilot study group (and when compared with those of the pilot control group) indicated that there was no significant improvement in the reading ability of the students.

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[5]Individualised reading of learner selected materials is emphasised and this subsumes the extensive reading of texts available. Such a process may not be appropriately labelled as extensive reading since this may imply that it is the quantity of the materials rather than the active involvement of the learner reader that would facilitate fluency in reading. Both intensive and extensive reading could co-exist and could be employed by the learner reader if he/she feels that this satisfies his/her needs, lacks and wants.

The cloze readability tests, drawn from all the students course books (except from the course book for Quantitative methods), which were administered at the beginning and end of the pilot study, did not show any marked difference in the readability levels of the course books. It is doubted whether or not the cloze procedure employed was the appropriate tool for assessing the readability levels of the course books.

The Freshman English 101A pretest and post test results of the pilot study group indicated that the pretest results were better than the post test results (means: pretest 40.59; post test 36.84). A similar result was indicated for the pilot control group (means: 36.80 and 34.50). The Freshman English 101B pretest and post test results of the pilot study group (means: 32.86 and 34.91) showed that the group had significantly improved in Freshman English 101B post test. However, a similar improvement was recorded for the pilot control group. Apparently, such results were attributed to (a) students' attitudes towards the relevance of taking the tests, and possibly to (b) the irregularity in the levels of difficulty in the tests, and (c) their degree of appropriateness for assessing improvements that could be gained through independent work. The cloze tests were the least appropriate in indicating the differences in levels of ability.

6.12 The main study

It was pointed out that the main study involved more than two-third of the total students in the social science first year level. About 210 students were assigned to the study group, and about the same number were considered in the control group. Like in the pilot study, the students in the main study group confirmed the accessibility of the recommended approach, and they reported that the reading materials (the ***SRA*** reading cards) helped them to improve their ability in reading comprehension and speed, and developed their vocabulary knowledge. In fact, some reported that they had changed their attitudes towards reading, and doing reading comprehension tests in examinations. They also stated that the mode of study did not only help them to study Freshman English but it also helped them significantly to study their other academic courses.

The questionnaire on the reading process and reading strategies administered at the

beginning and end of the study revealed that students' knowledge of the reading process and their use of appropriate reading strategies was not clearly marked. In both sessions, at the beginning of the study and at the end of the study, they reported that they had confidence in their ability to *recognise the main points from supporting details*. The preferred reading repair strategies were to *continue reading and hope for further clarification*, and *going back to a point before the problematic part and reread from there*. They indicated that their preferred effective reading strategies were *focusing on details of content* and *employing background knowledge*. Most students conceived that *recognising words* was their source of reading difficulty. At the beginning of the study, the best reader was identified as one who *understood the overall meaning of a text* and one who *focused on details of content*. At the end of the study, the best reader was conceived as one who had *a grasp of the organisation of a text*, who *used prior knowledge effectively*, and who *recognises words*. At the beginning of the study, most students felt that by *improving pronunciation* and *learning words* they could become fluent readers. At the end of the study, they stated that they could become fluent readers by *reading intensively and extensively*, and by *learning words*.

The reading comprehension pretests and post tests were drawn from the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate *First Certificate in English*. The t-test for the level of significance in the difference between the means of the scores of the study group in the reading comprehension pretest and post test indicated that the two means were different at $p < 0.05$. It was found out that the post test mean was significantly higher than the pretest mean of the scores of the study group. In other words, the study group, performed significantly better in the post test than in the pretest. Similarly, the study group performed significantly better than the control group in the reading comprehension post test. This finding indicated that the students who followed the recommended approach had significantly improved in their reading comprehension ability in relation to the performance of the control group on the same test, and in relation to their initial and terminal performance on the reading comprehension test. However, the results in the cloze tests were found to be inconclusive. Most students were found to be in the *frustrational* level for geography and history course books, although the latter seemed to be relatively easier than the former for the students.

The language tests were selected from old Freshman English 101A and Freshman English 101B examination papers. Though it was found out that both groups improved in their linguistic ability at the end of the study, no significant difference in performances could be established between the two groups. Both showed significant improvements at the end of the study. It is doubted whether or not (a) students saw any relevance in taking the two sets of tests, and (b) the levels of difficulty between the pair of tests (pretest and post test Freshman English 101A, or Freshman English 101B) were similar.

However, it was found out that there was a significant difference between the means of scores of the study group and the control group in the first semester official Freshman English 101A examination. The study group performed significantly better than the control group in this test. It was concluded that the approach used with the study group helped the students to score better grades than the students in the control group.

6.2 Recommendations

It has been indicated that the students in the study group have significantly improved in their reading comprehension ability[6]. They have also scored better grades in the official Freshman English 101A first semester final examination (1990-91 academic year). However, it is indicated that the results of the questionnaire and the other tests, including the cloze tests that did not seem to be appropriate tools for assessing independent work, are inconclusive. This could be, among other things, due to the nature of the tests or the students' attitudes towards these tests, or possibly, due to the fact that the tests indicate the product rather than the process. Based on the results of the study, the following issues could be raised for further research.

6.21 Reliable responses could be compiled from a questionnaire, such as the one used in this study, by devising it in such a way that students' responses could be studied through continuous observation. Moreover, as Allwright and Bailey

[6]This conclusion has been arrived at by comparing the students' scores on the reading comprehension pretest and post test, and by comparing the reading comprehension post test results of the study group and the control group.

(1991) and Candlin (1984:xiii) state, the questionnaire can be improved by "looking at the triangulation procedures in sociological method to see how we can make our reader accounts as rich and as warranted as possible." Such an approach would focus on the process rather than the product of reading.

6.22 The cloze tests have proved to be the least indicative tools. It has been shown that the cloze tests could not indicate any change in the levels of the reading ability of the students. Further investigation about the validity and reliability of the cloze procedure could be of some relevance to ascertain its relevance to establishing the readability levels of texts.

6.23 The language tests, despite the indicated improvements, could not show the progress the study group have made in linguistic knowledge. They seem to be not effective tools for assessing the gains of independent work. These tests, besides their other deficiencies (Teshome 1992), emphasise product rather than process (while individualised learning is process-orientated). Other appropriate tools could be employed to study the gains of independent learning.

6.24 It is believed that the change from teacher-directed to learner directed learning could not be achieved smoothly and within a short period of time. Significant results could have been compiled if the study had continued for more than a semester. Obviously, developing background knowledge in order to improve reading ability, and developing reading ability in order to improve background knowledge requires time, and learner interest and motivation.

6.25 The responses of the instructors and students strongly indicate positive results although most of the test results do not corroborate this. This disparity could be due to the research model employed. It is to be noted that the study was initiated in early 1989 with its emphasis on assessing product rather than observing the process of individualised reading. It is recommended that the effects of individualised reading or the process of independent learning could be studied by using a research paradigm that capitalises on the process rather than the product, although it is not implied that assessing product does not have any use at all. Developing reading ability is more of a process than a product, and test results may not depict the whole truth about the process.

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Appendix 1 Baseline Study

Appendix 1.1 Reading Texts for Baseline Study
1.11 Reading Text for History

Read the following text and take short notes

French Legal Policies

The Algerian Berbers suffered also in matters of justice. The original aim of the French was to uproot the Berber past and replace it with French ideas and machinery of justice. The French idea was that French institutions were not only just - absolutely just - but were also universally applicable. French justice was beyond question and good everywhere and therefore any Berber form was simply an obstacle to be brushed aside in order that the supposedly backward Berbers could better experience the freedom and equity of the French forms. Therefore the Muslim *quadis* and their tribunals were suspended and the Code Napoleon introduced for both civil and criminal cases. Later the native penal law the *(the code de loi Indigenat)* was promulgated and customary law continued to prevail in the Kabylie.

Clearly opposed to this French concept was the Berber-Arab viewpoint. For Muslims the *Quran* was the basis of their religion and their law; its precepts were immutable and sacred; to violate them was to assail their religion and liberty, and might result in holy war. They held the view that the law, as declared by Muhammad, was fixed and they could not accept the French contention that the law had to keep pace with the changing conditions in Europe. In their view the French were disseminating heresy. The Berbers, absolutely powerless before their masters, swallowed humilation. After the Kabylie revolt of 1871 the French attempted to clean sweep of the customs and institutions of the Berbers of Kabylie.

Politically the berbers were not taken into partnership. Administration remained under the control of the white colonists, usually hot-headed, opinionated, arrogant men but influential with the French administration, through their connections in the world of business and politics. They regarded Algeria as a mere extension of France, a view consistently endorsed by the French government until the advent of Charles de Gaulle. The Berbers were considered as backward, uncultured, ineducable and almost irredeemable, and were consequently excluded from the administration of the country. They did not qualify for French citizenship, the only citizenship recognized in Algeria, though in 188870 the Jews were naturalized *en masse*. Jules Ferry, a French prime minister, said of the indigenous Algerians in 1892: 'The moslems have no notion of the political mandate or of limited and contractual authority; they know nothing of a representative *regime* or of the separation of powers, but they have in the highest degree the instinct and need and ideal of a strong power and just power.'

The Algerian Berbers' reaction to the repressive policy of the French task masters was one of sullen resignation to their fate. Their past was being uprooted, their present

miserable and their future bleak. They had no love for French rule; they despaired and disaffection began to seethe among them. The eloquent silence of the masses was misconstrued by the French as evidence of satisfaction with their rule, and in later days when French began to argue that these nationalists did not represent the wishes and aspirations of the apparently apathetic masses.

From A.E. Afigabo, et al, *The Making of Modern Africa* (pp 192-3)

1.12 Reading Text for Management

Read the following text and take short notes.

The Difficulties of Sales Forecasting

As you have seen in the foregoing illustration the sales forecast is the foundation of the entire master budget. The accuracy of estimated production schedules and of cost to be incurred depends on the detail and accuracy in dollars and in units, of the forecast sales.

The sales forecast is usually prepared under the direction of the top sales executive. All of the following factors are important: (1) past patterns of sales; (2) the estimates made by the sales force; (3) general economic and competitive conditions; (4) specific interrelationships of sales and economic indicators, such as gross national product or industrial production indexes; (5) changes in prices; (6) market research studies; and (7) advertising and sales promotion plans.

Sales forecasting usually combines various techniques. Opinions of the sales staff are sought. Statistical methods are often used. Correlations between sales and economic indicators help make sales forecasts more reliable. In most cases, the quantitative analysis provided by economists and members of the market research staff provide valuable help but not outright answers. The opinions of line management heavily influence the final setting of sales forecasts.

Pricing policies can have pronounced effects on sales. Management's assessment of price elasticities (the effect of price changes on the physical volume sold) will influence the sales forecast. A company may not offer the same unit price to all customers (because of differences in costs of serving different markets). In such cases, a detailed analysis of both units to be sold as well as dollar sales is needed for each price category before a final sales forecast can be aggregated.

Sales forecasting is still somewhat mystical, but its procedures are becoming more formal and are being viewed more seriously because of the intensity of competitive pressures. Although this book does not encompass a detailed discussion of the preparation of the sales budget, the importance of an accurate sales forecast cannot be overstressed.

In recent years, the formal use of statistical probabilities has been applied to the problem of sales forecasting (see Chapter 16 for an elaboration). Moreover, financial planning models and simulation have enabled managers to get quantitative grasp on the ramifications of various sales strategies.

Financial Planning Models and Simulation

In most cases, the master budget is the best practical approximation to a formal model of the total organization: its objectives, its inputs, and its outputs. If the master budget

serves as a "total decision model" for top management, then decisions about strategies for the forthcoming period may be formulated and altered during the budgetary process. Traditionally reversed as executives exchange views on various aspects of expected activities.

In the future, much of the interaction and interdependence of the decisions will probably be formalized in mathematical simulation models - " total models" that are sometimes called financial-planning models. These models are mathematical statements of the relationships in the organization among all the operating and financial activities, and of other major internal and external factors that may affect decisions.

Financial models include all the ingredients for preparing a master budget. However, they can also be used for long-range planning decisions. For example, if managers want to predict the impact of adding a new product line, they can obtain budgeted financial statements for many future years. For instance, at Dow Chemical Company, 140 separate cost inputs, constantly revised, are fed into the model. Such factors are major raw material costs and prices by country and region are monitored weekly. Multiple contingency plans rather than a single master plan are used more widely than before.

Many models are constructed and working. They are used for budgeting, for revising budgets with little incremental effort, and for comparing a variety of decision alternatives as they affect the entire firm. The models speed the budgetary process and because the sensitivity of income and cash flows to various decisions can be tested promptly via a simulation.

Management can react quickly to events and to revisions in predictions of various aspects of operations. Moreover, mathematical probabilities can be incorporated in these models, so that uncertainty can be dealt with explicitly rather than informally.

1.13 Reading Text for Sociology

Read the following text and take short notes

The Population Explosion as a Crisis

The view of the population explosion as a crisis for mankind was first heard from a few isolated voices in the early years after World War II. It later rose to a chorus of concern, and more recently it has become a crescendo of alarm. According to this view, if man does not take immediate control of his numbers, the world will run out food, land, clean water and breathable air, energy, and other resources. The shortage of food and other resources will ultimately control or reduce man's numbers, but not without widespread starvation, disorganization, warfare, and all manner of suffering.

World population is currently growing at a rate of about two per cent each year, a rate at which the population doubles about every 35 years. From this has come a long list of colourful phrases, book titles, and slogans: "The population Bomb," "Standing Room Only," "The Garbage Explosion," "America the Dirty," and "The Human Zoo." Whether the problems depicted are worldwide, national, or local, they usually reduce to a few types of consequences which may be anticipated from such an enormous rate of growth.

First, there is likely to be increased pressure upon food, space, and other resources, and also upon the social and community relationships that determine who gets what and how much. The result of scarcities in resources is likely to be increases in economic hardship, malnutrition, and perhaps death rates, too. In 1970, population densities of 1,500 to 2,000 persons per block were very common on New York's Manhattan Island; it is hard to imagine the pressures that would result from a doubling of that density.

In the second place, it is widely believed that the resource drain resulting from rapid population growth may frustrate efforts of new underdeveloped nations to accelerate economic and social development and close the gap between rich and poor nations (see fig. 1.2). If India's growth rate is not reduced, her population will probably double in the next generation from 613 million to about 1,226 million, with no comparable growth of national product. Such a grim projection implies a doubling of the homelessness, the starvation, and the suffering already common in that country.

Finally, the differences in rates of growth among the different areas of the world (see Column 4 of end papers) will produce a redistribution of the world's population will probably have major implications for international politics. Europe's population, which accounted for an estimated 15 per cent of the world population in the year 1000, increased to almost 25 per cent by 1900. But 50 years later it was reduced to 16.4 per cent of the total, and by 1975 this figure was down to 11.9 per cent. Many observers are alarmed by prospects of accompanying cultural, political and economic declines in the West.

These three types of consequences of population growth recur in virtually every kind of social and cultural setting. Rapid population growth or change puts pressures on the resources - including jobs, camping grounds, housing, and education - of the state of California. In New York City, too, some of the demands and expectations of residents for resources like space, air, and water, as well as for educational, employment,

residential, or recreational opportunities, are frustrated by population turnover and newcomers' needs for basic amenities. And the delicate class, racial, and ethnic political balance of the cities of Chicago, Atlanta, Los Angeles, and for that matter Centerville, U.S.A., is constantly threatened by population shifts into, out of, or within these places. Busing conflicts, teachers' strikes, and zoning controversies are well-publicized examples. Thus, the problem of amounts and distribution of the earth's resources is accompanied by many other problems: poverty and want; space and clean air and environment; equality of opportunity and segregation of residences, schools, and employment; health, and access to care and treatment; and the availability (or, conversely, hoarding) of national goods, air and environment, health and medical care, entertainment, leisure, culture and all manner of resources in any of the societies of the world today.

Appendix 1.2 **Sample student notes** (by department)

1.21 History Department

Student A

The French attempted to replace the customs of the Algerian Berbers with their own ideas & machinery of justice,which they claimed to be absolutely just & universally applicable. This meant the Berbers were to be eliminated, from the point of view of customs.

Nevertheless, the Berbers, who made the Quran the basis of law & religion, saw the French activity as heresy. But the Berbers were not powerful enough, for the time being at least, to refuse effectively the French.
In the administrative sphere, the Berbers were not included. It was up to the white to rule.

The Berbers could do nothing about what was happening. But their silence didn't mean acceptance of French rule. The French on the other side, took the silence for acceptance of their rule.

Student B

- In the French policy the Algerian Berbers were oppressed in times of justice.
- The aim of France was to shape the Berbers past and make it France style of justice.
- The French believe in the international significance of their justice.
- Thus, both civil and criminal cases of the muslim Qadis were done by code of Napoleon.

What was really contrary to such concept of French was the Berber Arab viewpoint. It is widely accepted that the Qoran is everything for Muslims. All their life is based on the law of Qoran Thus, the French idea proved unimportant relatively compared with this

In terms of politics we do not see any unity among Berbers. Administration was under the white colonists. They assumed Algeria as their homeland. and considered the Berbers as illetrate, backward & uncultured people far from French extension. There was indeed a master servant relation. Because of this the reaction of Berbers to French rule was their fate.

Student C

Algeria Berber injustice suffer. French original aim to replace old Berber..... French justice was ..... but Berber obstacle, suspend of moslim qadis by replacing it with ..... . Later native penal law...(the code de loi Indigenant)....Berber Arabs opposition....For muslims Quran was basis of their religion and law.... immulable of sacred. To violate

them mean to .... religion &liberty-> holy war. They held the view that the law, as declared by mohamm.ed ....In their view the French disseminating heresy. The Berbers... swallowed humilation. After the Kabyile revolt of 1871 the French...politically the Berbers were not taken ..... Administration remained under the control of .....but influential with the French administration through their connection.... They regarded Algeria as a .....Charles de Gaulle. The Berbers were considered as .....etc. consequently excluded... They did not qualify for ..., only citizenship recognized....Algerian Berbers' reaction to .... was....Their past uprooted, their present miserable of their future bleak. But the eloquent silence of the masses was regarded as if the French tried to use as evidence that....

Student D

French legal policies

France did not let the Algerian Berbers use their own law. France had an original aim to do it. France belived that her justice institutions were universally applicable. France was also belived her justice was good every where. that meant it could replace the supposedly back ward Berbers law. therefore, France suspended the muslim quadis and replaced it by Napoleon code for both cevil and criminal cases. Later the native penal law was promulgate: and customary law continued to prevail in Kabylie.

The Berbers-Arab view point did not have any similarity with this French concept. For Muslems Quran was the base for religion and for law. They strongly opposed the violation of their law, Because, to violate their law means to assail their religion and librity, and might result in holy war. They did not accept the French contention that the law had to keep pace with the changing conditions of Europe. They argued that their law declared by Mohammad and this law could not be changed, to a new one. Although their absolut weakness obliged them to accept France's code law, they thought that the French were people who were disseminating heresy.

The Berbers did not have equal partiner ship with the French. Administration remained under the control of the white colonists, usually hot-headed, openionated, arrogant men but influented with the French administration, through their connections in the world of business and poletics. They considered that Algeria was a mere extension of France. The Berbers were considered as backward, uncultured, ineducable and almost irredeemable, and were consequently excluded from the administration of the country. So they could not be qualified to the French citizenship.
The Algerian Berbers' ~~were~~ reaction to the repressive policy of the French taskmasters was one of sullen r signation to their fate. Since they felt that their present mesrable condition would bleak their future, the Berbers hated the French rule more seriously.

Student E

The people of Algeria was Berbers and they were suffered in matters of justices. these berbers constituted one part of Algerian population. The original aim of French legal policies was to uproot the Berber and to replace them with French ideas and machinery of justice. this French ideas were absolutely just and also universally applicable. this

justice was beyond the question and good every where. This policies were inorder the Berber could the better experience the freedom and equity of the french forms. and this policies suspended the muslim qadis and tribunal able to introduce the code of Napoleon for civil and criminal cases in the Berber. The native penal law was promulgated and customary law continued to prevail in the kabylie. The muslim of Algeria believed Quran was the basis of their religion and their law, its precepts were immutable and sacred; to violate them was to assail their religion and liberty and might result a holy war. The muslim also regarded the French were disseminating heresy. After the revolt of 1871 the French attempted to clean sweep of the customs and institutions of the Berbers of kabylie. politically the Berbers of Algeria were not taken into consideration and administrative power remained in the hands of the white colonists. The French regarded Algeria as a mere extension of France and the Berbers considered as backward and they were excluded from administration of the country. And they did not qualify for French citizenship. The muslim have no notion of political mandate of limited and contractual authority; they know nothing of representative regime or of the separation of powers. The Algerian Berbers reaction to the repressive policy of the french task masters was one of sullen resignation to their fate. their past was being uprooted, their present miserable and their future bleak. They had no love for french rule; they dispaired and disaffection began to see ~~the~~ among them.

Student F

The Algerians were suffered also in matter of justice. The French thought that any form of the Berbers was very back ward and obstacle for the berbers to get freedom and to be equal with French forms, which they thought as absolutely just and universaly aplicable. there fore the muslim qadi and their tribunals were suspended and the code of Napoleon introduced for both civil and criminal cases. later the native penal law (the code de loi de Indigent) was promulugated and customary law continued to prevail in the kabylie. In fact this situation might brought a Holy war. Because the muslim law based on Quran, that is sacread. The Berber-Arab feel that attacking Quran means attacking God or muhammads order. The institution the Berbers kabylie was sweep off after the revolt of kabylie in 1871. The french regarded Algeria as a more extension of France until the advent of charles de Gaulle. As the Berbers considered as backward, they were not assign in administration, which was given the French men who were influential and French administration. The Berbers were not consider as citizen. The Berbers disatisfied with this French policy . It change their social, poletical and economic life.

1.22 Management

Student A

Financial planning models and simulation

* In most cases, the master budget is the best practical approximation to a formal modal of the total organization a) its objective b) its inputs and c) its out puts
*In the future much of the interaction and interdependence of the decision will probably be formalized in mathamatical simulation model
*Total models called financial planning models is (a) mathematical statements of the relation ships in the organization among all the operating and financial activities (b) and of other majorization among operating financial and (c) major internal and external factors that may affect decision.
*financial models include all the ingredients for preparing a master budget, and also used for long range planning decision
*many models are constructing and working and used for budgeting, for revising budgets with little incremental effort and for comparing a variety of decision alternatives as they affect entire firm.

Student B

Sales forecasting

A sales forecasting is difficult task, further, it the most important business for the organization. How an orgn. forecasts its sales would be the basis for the overall organizational performance. Even if, it demands greater skill and attention. There are numerous factors which could be ignored, but still very important. Among other things, the opinions, judgments of the line management considering all the variables including the other competitative marketers could sway and influence the final outcome of the forecast. Thus managers have to delve into financial planning models and simulation so that they could grasp on the branches of various sales strategies. In the sales forecast to be somewhat accurate, the master budget serves as a practical device to the top mgt. "Total models" or financial planning models are to formalize the interaction and interdependence of decisions by providing all the necessary ingredients, along with the mathematical elements that help in preparing the master budget.

Student C

The Difficulties of sales forecasting

Sales forecasting is the foundation of the entire master budget. The sales forecast is usually prepared under the direction of the top sales executive. All of the following factors are important ;(1)past patterns of sales; (2) the estimates made by the sales force;(3) general economic and competetive conditions ;(4)specific interelationships of sales and economic indicators such as gross national product or industrial prodn indexes; (5)charges in prices; (6)market research studies; and (7)advertising and sales promotion plans.

Sales forecasting usually combines various techniques, opinions of the sales staff are sought. Statistical methods are often used. Correlation b/n sales and economic indicators help make sales forecast more reliable. Pricing policies can have pronounce effects on sales.

Recently, sales forecasting uses or applies statistical probabilities. Moreover, financial planning models and simulations have enabled managers to get quantitative grasp on the ramifications of various sales strategies.

Financial planning models and simulation

In most cases, the master budget is the best practical approximation to a formal model of the total organisation:its objectives, its inputs, and its outputs. If the master budget serves as a "total decision model" for top management, then decisions about strategies for the forthcoming period may be formulated and altered during the budgetary process.

In the future, much of interaction and interdependence of the decisions will probably be formalized in mathematical simulation models - "total models" that are sometimes called financial planning models. These models are mathematical statements of the relation-ships in the organization among all the operating and financial activities, and of other major internal and external factors that amy affect decisions.

Financial models include all the ingredients for preparing a master budget. However, they can also be used for long-range planning decisions.
Models are used for budgeting, for revising budgets with little incremental efforts and for comparing a variety of decision alternatives as they affect the entire firm. The models speed the budgetary process because the sensitivity of income and cash flows to various decisions can be tested promptly via a simulation. These all helps management to revise the operation and take remedial action so that uncertainty will be dealt with expiratly.

Student D

The difficulties of sales forecasting

-The sales budget is the foundation of the entire master budget.
-The sales forecast is usually prepared under the direction of the top sales executives. The following factors are included under the sales forecast:

-post patterns of sale
-the estimates made by the sales force
-general economic & competitive conditions
-specific interrelationships of sales and economic indicators
-changes in prices
-market research studies
-advertising and sales promotion plans
-sales forecasting usually combines various techniques. Among them
-seeking the opinion of the sales staff
-using of statistical methods
-correlating sales with economic indicators to make sales forecast more

reliable

-taking quantitative analysis which will provide valuable help but not outright answers

-taking the opinion of line management

-pricing policies can have pronounced effects on sales.

-Sales forecasts can be influenced management's assessment of price elasticities

-If a company cannot offer the same unit price to all customers, a detailed analysis of both units to be sold and dollar sales is need for each price category before a final sales forecast can be aggregated.

-Because of the intensity of competitive pressures, the procedures of sales forecasting are becoming more formal and are being viewed more seriously.

Financial planning models and simulation

-The master budget is the best practical approximation to a formal model of the total organization in its : - objectives -input and outputs
-If it serves as a "total decision model" in to p mgt, then decisions about strategies in the forthcoming period may be formulated and altered during the budgetary process.
-In the future, much of the interaction and interdependence of the decision will probably be formalised in mathematical simulation model(financial planning model). They are mathematical statements of the relationships in the organ. among all the operating and financial activities, and of other major internal and external factors may affect decisions.
-Financial models include all the ingredients for preparing a master budget. However, they can also be used for long-range planning decisions
-many models which are constructed and working used - for budgeting - revising budgets with little incremental efforts - comparing a variety of decision alternatives as they affect the entire firm.
-the models speed the budgetary process because the sensitivity of income and cash flows to various decisions can be tested promptly via a simulation.

Student E

The difficulties of sales forecasting

Sales forecast is the foundation of the entire master budget. The accuracy of estimated production schedules and of cost to be incurred depends on the detail and accuracy in dollars and in unit of forecasted sales.

Sales forecast is usually prepared under the direction of the top sales executives and the factors to be taken are 1. past pattern os sales 2. the estimate made by the sales force 3. general economic and competitive conditions 4.specific internal relationships of sales and economic indicators such as gross national product, or industrial production indexes 5.change in prices 6. market research studies 7. advertising and sales production plan.

Sales forecast usually combines various techniques such as opinion of sales force, statistical method, co relation between sales and economic indicators, quantitative analysis by economists and the member of market research staff opinion of line management, the

effect of sales policy on sales and price elasticity should be taken into account in the analysis of sales forecast.

Financial planning models and simulation

In recent year the use of statistical probabilities, financial planning models and simulation are used for sales forecasting. Although master budget is the best practical approximation of formal model of the total organization its objective, its input and its outputs. In future the interaction and interdependence of decision will probably formalized in mathematical simulation model "total model" or called financial planning model. The model are mathematical statements relating to operating and financial activities and factors affecting decision externally and internally.

The financial model includes master budget, long range planning, to predict the impact of adding new product line for future and multiple contingency plan. Models used to speed income and cash inflow via simulation and to compare alternative decisions.

Student F

The difficulties of sales forecasting

The sales forecast is the foundation of the entire master budget The sales forecast is usually prepared under the direction of top sales executives. In the forecasting process the following factors are important 1)past patterns of sales 2)estimates made by the sales force; 3) general economic and competetive conditions; 4) interrelationship of sales and economic indicators such as gross national produce and industrial production indexes; 5) changes in prices; 6)market research studies; and 7) advertising and sales promotion plans

The qualitative analysis provided by economists and members of the market research staff provide help but not out right answers line management, pricing policies and management's assessment of price elasticities will also influence sales forecast.
Where different customers are served a detailed analysis os both units to be sold as well as dollar sales is needed for each price category before the final sales forecast. Formal use os statistical probabilities, financial planning models and simulation have enabled managers to get quantitative grasp on the various sales strategies.

Financial planning model and simulation

The master budget serves as a "total decision model" for top management therefore decisions about strategies for the forth coming period may be formulated and altered during the budgetary process.

Simulation models are mathematical statements of the relationship in the organization among all the operating and financial activities and also among operating financial activities.

Financial models include all ingredients for preparing a master budget. In most cases

contingency plans are prepared rather than the single master plan more widely than before. Many models speed the budgetary process because the sensitivity of income and cash flows to various decisions can be tested promptly via simulation. Mathematical probabilities can be incorporated in these models, so that uncertainty can be dealt with explicitly rather than informally.

1.23 Sociology

Student A

The view of population explosion as a crisis for mankind was first heard from a few isolated voices in the early years after world war II. If man does not take immediate control of his numbers, the world will run out of food, land, clean water, and breatheable air,energy, other resources. World population is currently growing at a rate of about two percent each year. Whether the problems depicted are world wide, national or local they usually reduce to a few types of consequences which may be anticipated from such an enormous rate of growth.

First there is likely to be increased pressure upon food, space and other resources and also upon the social and community relationship that determine, who gets what and how much. The result of scarcities in resources is likely to be increases in economic hardship, malnutrition and perhaps deathrates, too.

In second place, it is widely believed that the resource drain resulting from rapid population growth may frustrate efforts of new underdeveloped notions to accelerate economic and social development and close the gap between rich and poor nations. Finally, the difference in rates of growth among the different areas of the world will produce a redistribution of the world's population which will probably have major implications for international politics.

The problem of amounts and distribution of the earth's resources is accompanied by many other problems:overt and want, space and clean air and environment equality of opportunity and segregation of residences, schools, and employment, health, and access to care and treatment and the availability (or conversely, hoarding) of national goods, air and environment, health and medical care, entertainment, leisure, culture, and all manner of resources in any of the societies of the world today.

Student B

The first picture of the population growth rate was seen by some people as a major crisis of mankind, after II world war. Late it became the trouble of the masses.
This indicate that if there is no measures against the growth of population there will be shortage of food. The shortage of food further control or reduce the number of population and for this to result it is accompanied by widespread starvation, warfare and the like.
At present time regarding the growth rate of population which is about 2% each year many flourished words are thrown which mainly rests on the accusation of an extremely growing number of people.

1. measure has to be taken to fill the gap of need of food and other resources, and social and community relationship is also important so as to be able to standardize the service one can get. With the absence of the available resources a serious danger such as death, malnutrition and the like.

2.As a consequence of enormous growth of population the resources become exhausted

and particularly the developing countries attempt towards the social and economic development will be hopeless. This further extended to the point that each problem going on doubling.

3. Due to differences of growth rate among the different areas of world's population which will produce the redistribution of population is expected to be the major area in international affairs.

In general the consequences of grow rate of population disturb the whole hopes and needs that man is struggling to fulfil, which are social and economic needs.

Student C

Before world war II there was an assumption that population growth could create problem. After second world war population increases at a higher rate. The view of population explosion stated that man must be able to control his member. If this not the case the basic needs of other resources will be scarce. The shortage of these resources will ultimately reduces man's number. To decrease the growth rate of population there must be also another factor such as warfare, disorganization, widespread starvation and all manners of suffering.

At present the doubling time of the world population is 35 years having a growth rate of 2%. This enormous rate of growth may have some negative consequences

1. increasing pressure up on food, space & other resources also upon the social & community relationships. The result of scarcity in resources is likely is likely to be increases in economic hardship, malnutrition & death rates.

2. resources drain resulting from rapid population growth may frustrate efforts of new underdeveloped nations.

3. differential growth rate will produce a redistribution of the world's population which will probably have major implications for international politics.

The problem of amounts and distribution of the earth's resources is accompanied by many other problems: overt & want; space & clean air & environment; equality of opportunity and segregation of residences, schools, and employment, health, and access and care and treatment, and the avail- & medical care, entertainment, leisure, culture and all manner of resources in any of the societies of the world today.

Appendix 2 Questionnaire on knowledge of the reading process and reading strategies (for students)

Appendix 2.1 Questionnaire for the pilot administered at the beginning of the second semester of the academic year 1989/90

FORM

Dear Student

The major aim of this study is to find ways and means of helping students learn better and take responsibility for their learning through improved methods of reading in English. Most students find their academic studies very difficult probably due to their inability to read well. Your honest responses to the questions below are crucial for the success of the study.

PLEASE INDICATE THE LEVEL OF YOUR AGREEMENT OR DISAGREEMENT WITH EACH STATEMENT BY WRITING THE APPROPRIATE NUMBER.

1 indicates STRONG AGREEMENT, 2 indicates AGREEMENT 3 indicates NEUTRAL, 4 DISAGREEMENT 5 STRONG DISAGREEMENT

Name _____ Code number _____
Age _____ Sex ____ Section _____
Mother tongue _____
Family background: 1 rich 2 middle 3 poor ( )
Location of school you came from: 1 urban 2 rural ( )
Type of school: 1 academic 2 vocational 3 comprehensive ( )
Nature of school: 1 government 2 public 3 private 4 mission ( )

Achievement:
ESLCE cumulative GPA: 1) 4 2) 3.4-3.8 3) 2.6-3.2 4) 2-2.4 ( )
ESLCE English grade 1) A 2) B 3) C 4) D 5) F ( )

Original choice of field of study:
1) Social Science 2) Science 3) Agriculture 4) Medicine 5) others ( )

Are you happy with your present placement? 1) yes 2) no ( )

I have now developed the habit of reading

1. in mother tongue and /or Amharic ( )
2. in English ( )

My major purpose for reading is for

3. entertainment ( )
4. study or examination ( )

When reading silently in English

5. I am able to anticipate what will come next in the text ( )
6. I am able to recognise the difference between main points and supporting details ( )
7. I am able to relate information which comes next in the text to previous information in the text ( )
8. I am able to question the significance or truthfulness of what the author says ( )
9. I am able to use my prior knowledge and experience or general knowledge (academic, etc) to understand the content of the text I am reading ( )
10. I have a good sense of when I understand something and when I don't ( )

When reading academic texts in English, if I do not understand something

11. I keep on reading and hope for clarification further on ( )
12. I read the problematic part ( )
13. I go back to a point before the problematic part and reread ( )
14. I look up unknown words in a dictionary ( )
15. I give up and stop reading ( )
16. I always depend on my teachers for help and explanation ( )

When reading silently in English, the things I do to read effectively are to focus on

17. mentally sounding out parts of the words ( )
18. understanding the meaning of each word ( )
19. getting the overall meaning of the text ( )
20. being able to pronounce each whole word ( )
21. the grammatical structures ( )
22. relating the text to what I already know about the topic ( )
23. looking up words in the dictionary ( )
24. the details of the content ( )
25. the organisation of the text ( )

When reading silently a text in English, things that make the reading difficult are

26. the sounds of the individual words ( )
27. pronunciation of the words ( )
28. recognizing the words ( )
29. the grammatical structures ( )
30. the alphabet ( )
31. relating the text to what I already know about the topic ( )
32. getting the overall meaning of the text ( )
33. the organisation of the text ( )
34. extracting salient points to summarize ( )
35. skimming for the gist of the text and scanning for specifically required information ( )
36. transcoding information ( )

I think that the best reader in English is one who has the ability to

37. recognize words ( )
38. sound out words ( )
39. understand the overall meaning of a text ( )
40. use a dictionary ( )
41. guess at word meanings ( )
42. integrate the information in the text with what he already knows ( )
43. focus on the details of the content ( )
44. grasp the organization of the text ( )

I think I can become a fluent reader in English and I can study better if

45. the lecturer marks my assignments ( )
46. I improve my reading ability through better methods of reading ( )
47. I learn more words in English ( )
48. I am given the chance to learn through discovery ( )
49. I gradually learn to take responsibility for my learning ( )

Appendix 2.2 Questionnaire for the main study administered at the beginning of the academic year 1990/91

FORM:

Please indicate your responses by writing the appropriate numbers in the spaces provided.

I. Personal information

Name _____ I.d number _____
Age _____ Sex_____ Section_____

Mother tongue: (write 1 for Amharic, 2 for Oromigna, 3 for Tigrigna, 4 for others, and 5 for non-Ethiopian) ( )

Family background: (write 1 for rich, 2 for middle, 3 for poor) ( )

Location of school you finished high school: (1 for urban, 2 for rural) ( )

Type of school: (1 for academic, 2 for vocational, 3 for comprehensive) ( )

Nature of school: (1 for government, 2 for public, 3 for private, 4 for mission, 5 for others) ( )

Performance:

ESLCE or equivalent cumulative G.P.A.:
1) 4, 2) 3.4 - 3.8 3) 2.6 - 3.2 4) 2.0 to 2.4 ( )

ESLCE English language
1) A 2) B 3) C 4) D 5) F ( )

Placement:

Original choice of field of study:
(1 for social science, 2 for science, 3 for agriculture, 4 for medicine 5 for others) ( )

Are you happy with your present placement?
(1 for yes, 2 for undecided, 3 for no) ( )

II. The following questions are meant to find out your knowledge of the reading process and your active use of the different styles and skills of reading. Please indicate the level of your agreement or disagreement with each statement by writing the appropriate number in the space provided.

1 indicates *strong agreement* **2** indicates *agreement*
3 indicates *undecided (neutral)* **4** indicates *disagreement*
5 indicates *strong disagreement.*

A. I have the ability to use the different styles of reading to suit my purpose of reading and I can employ the different skills of reading in

1. My mother tongue ( )
2. Amharic ( )
3. English ( )

B. I think the purpose of reading is mostly for

4. study and examination ( )
5. entertainment ( )

C. When reading silently in English I am able to

6. anticipate what will come next in the text ( )
7. recognize the difference between main points and supporting details ( )
8. relate information which comes next in the text to previous information in the text ( )
9. question the significance or truthfulness of what the author says ( )
10. use my prior knowledge and experience or general knowledge to understand the content of the text I am reading ( )
11. say when I understand something, and when I do not ( )

D. When reading academic texts in English, if I do not understand something, I

12. keep on reading and hope for clarification further on ( )
13. read the problematic part ( )
14. go back to a point before the problematic part and reread starting from there ( )
15. look up unknown words in a dictionary ( )
16. give up and stop reading ( )
17. always depend on my teachers for help and explanation ( )

E. When reading silently in English, the things I do to read effectively are to focus on

18. mentally sounding out parts of the words ( )
19. understanding the meaning of each word ( )
20. getting the overall meaning of the text ( )
21. being able to pronounce each whole word ( )
22. the grammatical structures ( )
23. relating the text to what I already know about the topic ( )
24. looking up words in the dictionary ( )
25. the details of the content ( )
26. the organisation of the text ( )

F. When reading silently a text in English, things that make the reading difficult are

27. the sounds of the individual words ( )
28. pronunciation of the words ( )
29. recognizing words ( )
30. the grammatical structures ( )
31. the alphabet ( )
32. relating the text to what I already know about the topic ( )
33. getting the overall meaning of the text ( )
34. the organization of the text ( )
35. extracting important points to summarize ( )
36. skimming for the general sense of the text and scanning for specifically required information ( )
37. transcoding information ( )

G. I think the best reader in English is the one who has the ability to

38. recognize words ( )
39. sound out words ( )
40. understanding the overall meaning of a text ( )
41. use a dictionary ( )
42. guess at word meanings ( )
43. integrate the information in the text with what s/he already knows ( )
44. focus on the details of the content ( )
45. grasp the organisation of the text ( )

H. I think I can become the best reader in English and can study better in English than I do now if

46. I learn words ( )
47. I improve my pronunciation ( )
48. I am given the opportunity and the facilities to learn to read fluently by myself ( )
49. I can take the responsibility to learn to read as much as possible within my own limits ( )
50. the lecturer teaches me very well and marks my assignments regularly ( )

Appendix 2.3 Questionnaire for the main study group administered at the end of the first semester of the 1990/91 academic year.

NAME ..... I.D. ..... Section

PLEASE INDICATE YOUR AGREEMENT OR DISAGREEMENT WITH THE FOLLOWING BY WRITING AS SHOWN BELOW. PLEASE RESPOND AS HONESTLY AS POSSIBLE

Strong agreement [1], Agreement [2], Neutral [3], Disagreement [4], Strong disagreement [5]

I. Most of the time I read for
1. study or examination [ ]
2. entertainment [ ]

II. When I read in English (silently) I am now able to
3. say what will come next in the text I am reading [ ]
4. recognize the difference between main points and supporting details [ ]
5. relate information which comes next in the text to previous information in the text [ ]
6. evaluate or judge the significance of what I read [ ]
7. use my general knowledge to understand the text [ ]

III. When I am reading in English silently, if I do not understand, I
8. continue reading and hope for further clarification [ ]
9. read the problematic part [ ]
10. go back to a point before the problematic part and reread from there [ ]
11. give up and stop reading [ ]
12. always depend on my teachers for help [ ]

IV. In order to read effectively, I focus on
13. understanding the meaning of each word [ ]
14. getting the overall meaning of the text [ ]
15. pronouncing each whole word [ ]
16. the grammatical structures [ ]
17. relating the text to what I know about the topic [ ]
18. looking up words in the dictionary [ ]
19. the details of the content [ ]
20. the organisation of the text [ ]

V. When I read in English things that make it difficult are
21. the sounds and pronunciation of individual words [ ]
22. recognizing words [ ]
23. the grammatical structures [ ]
24. relating the text to what I know about the topic [ ]

25. getting the overall meaning of the text [ ]
26. the organisation of the text [ ]
27. extracting important points to summarise [ ]
28. getting the general sense of the text or specifically required information [ ]
29. putting the information in the text in another form, for example, in an outline or a graph or table [ ]

VI. The best reader in English is one who has the ability to
30. recognise words [ ]
31. pronounce words [ ]
32. use a dictionary [ ]
33. guess at word meanings [ ]
34. integrate the information in the text with what he already knows [ ]
35. focus on the details of the content [ ]
36. grasp the organisation of the text [ ]

VII.I can become the best reader in English if I
37. learn many words [ ]
38. improve my pronunciation [ ]
39. am taught very well [ ]
40. learn grammar [ ]
41. read as many times as possible [ ]

==========

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING ABOUT YOUR READING THIS SEMESTER

1. I started with the colour ..... and I read ..... cards.
My average reading speed and working speed were ..... and ..... respectively.
My average comprehension and vocabulary scores were ..... and .... respectively.

2. I am now using ..... colour and I have read .... cards.
My average reading speed and working speed are .... and .... respectively.
My average comprehension and vocabulary scores are .... and .... respectively.

3. Did you enjoy the reading programme? yes [ ] no [ ]
Did you like the reading materials? yes [ ] no [ ]
The reading programme helped me in studying
a. Freshman English yes [ ] no [ ]
b. my other subjects yes [ ] no [ ]
I would like to see
c. more time given to reading lab yes [ ] no [ ]
d. more time given to discussion yes [ ] no [ ]
e. the same arrangement for the next semester yes [ ] no [ ]

4. Can you suggest any improvement that you would like to see in the programme?

.....

5. Can you write below your impressions about and the advantages you got from the programme?

.....

Appendix 2.4 Questionnaire for staff involved in the main study administered at the end of the main study

September 1991

Dear instructor

As well know, you were involved last academic year in a study aimed at justifying a methodology designed to effectively promote academic reading in English. Could you please indicate your honest responses to the following items about the study, and, if need be, add your own opinions, observations and expectations about the study and its outcomes (regarding changes in student reading performances and reading habits and styles) vis-a-vis your knowledge about the teaching of and/or the learning of academic reading in English. Your responses will remain unanimous unless you state to the contrary.

Thank you.

Gebremedhin Simon

1. Generally speaking, did you feel that you were involved in the study? Did you take it as your own? Why?

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2. What aspect of the procedure interested you very much? Why?

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3. What aspect of the procedure was difficult and inconvenient to carry out? But, did you see its relevance to the task?

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4. To what extent have your opinions about the methodology of teaching academic reading in English changed now that you have participated in the study?

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5. What are the major advantages of the methodology?

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6. What are the major drawbacks of the methodology?

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7. What do you think is the main emphasis of the methodology?

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8. Do you believe that this procedure narrows the alleged gap between students' reading ability and the academic reading requirements? Why?

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9. What were the general reading styles and strategies your students employed at the beginning of the study and towards the end of the study? How easy was it to detect the change, if there was any?

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10. Did your students feel that they would succeed in passing their examination in English by using the recommended procedure in the beginning of the study? How about in the end?

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11. At the initial stages, did you feel that your students were not going to pass their English examination if they followed the recommended procedure? Why? What did you feel towards the end of the study?

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12. How did your students react to the methodology? At the beginning? in the end?

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13. How can the methodology be revised and improved to suit our educational objectives?

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14. How did the results of your students (in the control and study groups, if you had a pair) on the Freshman English 101A final examination contrast?

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15. Any other comments

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Appendix 3 Selected written responses to the questions on the approach and materials used in the study

Appendix 3.1 Student reports

Appendix 3.11 Student reports in the pilot study

str. 3.111

a. this story also very interesting, because it deals with the adventure of the journey and the words that used to express the situation was very interesting.

b. Like the other readings this also help me to know some words. The story also was interesting, so I tried to finish it in 20 minutes, also I did it. In this passage (reading) I focus in words additionally their usage in the reading.

c. this reading also help me to know some words and their usage because of the story I read all the words which I found in the book. Moreover, the story was such an exiting story so that I totally able to finish it in 20 minute.

d. I like this book which I mentioned earlier, I got some advanced vocabularies so I tried my best to understand them by finding in the dictionary. I also progressing in reading or understanding the hole sentence.

str. 3.112

a. I like the materials they are very interesting. I remember the main story and the place or persons or things it revolves around. I focus on words and meaning to understand the story. When I am reading I usually look out for the general ideas that surface now and then.

str. 3.113

a. I read this book in one period. It was very simple to understand. The words used here are all elementary. The syntax is of course straight forward no difficulty is there to understand. I follow up the story of the young rather than other people who met with him.

b. I was retarded and read few pages. B/s I was managed to have some notes on the matter. As the title indicates it is the history of a country so it needs some consideration. I think that seems to be the factor which retarded me. But there is no problem in understanding the syntax, no strange words.

c. Here is also no problem in understanding. But I can't manage to have equal speed with that of any other story I read before. Since this needs a serious

consideration I'm not successful in reading fast. But I feel some progress than before.

d. I think I am progressing both in reading and understanding. No challenge up to now. The material is not as such a challenging one. The summary I wrote is a few days after I read the book which shows I recall the story. I am also eager to know the end. Because it is an interesting one. No strange word, grammatical problem faced till now.

e. This book is level two. I faced some difficulties in understanding some sentences. They are somewhat grammatical, i.e., they may used by natives because even though I use dictionaries they can't be clear to me. No new words ... . I tried my best but I can't finish the material in the given time. I can remember the story I have read.

f. This book in level 4. But I face no problem on any of the lists above. But still I can't complete the book on the time given. I can't understand where my problem is lying.

g. Here I hac some problem of understanding words. Because there are many words which are technical. I didn't use them in my to day activity. Other than this there is nothing to be considered as a problem.

str. 3.114

a. Even though I am interested so much on the story when I have to read the book, some problems are faced to me that is what I have to do, and how can I understand the story. After a little beat I started to remember what I have to do and remember the main concept and reading fastly. Generally I improved myself in reading and looking for the general ideas of the book.

b. Really, I have progressed in my reading ability starting from the beginning of attending in the ILS laboratory and also I am always initiated to read such interesting books and trained myself by reading throughout my life, and I used the materials that are prepared for training people in their reading habit.

str. 3.115

a. Most of the time I read level 1 books and I didn't meet any difficulty about words. But at first when I read a book, usually my attention was to see words that had two meaning. My first problem was to read fast. If I read fast, in most cases I lost the main points of the book.

b. In this book I tried to read fast and I experienced bit by bit read fast. Sometimes I found phrasal verbs that were difficult to understand their actual meaning to that of paragraph. One thing I would like to mention is that this reading in the reading room give a better interest for books.

c. When I read a book I tried to understand the book by summarizing each

paragraph and give my own idea about the book. Sometime when I found difficult words I put on my sweet book and look on to the dictionary.

d. Most of the time my interesting is based on the book that are written on the true story of popular man. ...I improve a lot in read the book and understanding their main idea.

str. 3.116

a. If I continue my reading such fictions as Roadie and the like I will become a good reader. I am very fast in reading English, unless I get difficult words. I can remember three-fourth of what I read. When I read fiction I focus on meaning of the sentences and looking for general ideas.

b. I enjoyed my reading very much looking for general ideas by focusing on the meaning of sentences.

str. 3.117

a. I am progressing in reading. The material is very interesting. I remember most of the story. Words like funeral and cousin are not so clear but the rest are clear.

b. In my reading I am progressing. The material is good and I remember most of the story.

str. 3.118

a. I liked the material very much because i) it is easy to understand the main points ii) it has no difficult words to understand iii) it is easy to remember iv) easy to read as quickly as possible and my reading ability in this material increases because it has no difficult words and has a good syntax.

b. I liked the material very well. I also got some advancements in reading techniques, for instance, not to give more attention on dates, places and others rather than trying to memorize the whole story.

c. I liked the material very much in that i) the story is easy to understand, to remember ii) it has no words which are difficult to understand. The general and main points of the story. ii) It has a good syntax and because of this my reading ability increasing very well.

d. My reading ability increases much but not as fast as in the story "The House on the Hill". I liked the material very much in that it is easy to understand with simple words and syntax. I can remember the meaning of the whole story, its general ideas and main points.

e. I liked the material because it bears a good story on Robbers. In my point of view I am a medium reader in speed. My focus is on places and other tricks and events. But I don't bother about dates and others. In order to understand the story, I always, after hearing or reading I will summarize my own general ideas.

f. I wold say my reading progresses from the above (the first book) and I liked the materials very much because of their good warm stories. Still I have not got any difficulty in reading and in vocabulary.

g. I liked the material because the story was so simple to understand. Still I don't have any problem in vocabulary because I am trying to know the word from the sentences that are found with or with in the word, and I also made many advancements in reading and memorizing the story.

h. My admiring and appreciating the material increases from time to time as I passed from one book to the other. Still all are easy to understand their stories. I think they are prepared for other grades, and the stories are attractive as you passed from one page to the next.

str. 3.119

a. Concerning words I benefit good words, phrasal verbs and ... . But sometimes I faced a problem of word comprehension. Specially phrasal verbs. But I tried my best technique of knowing the meaning by contextually.

b. Finally I appreciate this programme. Unfortunately the exam was approaching so I am forced to gave up by this time. But if I have a chance of learning such type of subject I am interested to continue.

c. From the beginning I like it the material in such a way that it used to know our level in reading. That I could not finish one story within one credit hour. But in the future I will try to improve my reading skill.

d. This book was a little vast than that of the first book so by adding my reading speed I can finish it within 1:30 hrs. This indicates that through experience I can read two books within one hour.

str. 3.1110

a. I am interested in these books and read deeply. And I did not get any problem in this book, and I read general ideas.

b. The book and the history very interested and attracted for me, then read another fiction to push. I liked the material because I give the reason in the top of our comment. My focus on words, syntax, meaning, etc in order to understand the story, I read looking for general ideas.

c. My evaluation of my progress in reading good. ... I read looking for the main ideas.

d. My comment in this book the title of the long Tunnel. I liked the material and I read very slow because the book is very interesting and attractive, I focus on the words, syntax, meaning etc. in order to understand the story, read looking for general ideas.

str. 3.1111

a. Like most of the books I had no difficulty in this one. And reading was interesting.

str. 3.1112

a. Since such materials are prepared in a short form and a clear language I like them. When I read the story I mostly focus on sentence construction and about the general content of the story message.

b. As I mentioned above I liked the material. Because of this from the beginning to the end I could develop speed of reading. I can remember most of the story. Mostly I focused on sentence building (syntax). Finally, I was attentively reading and following the general ideas of the booklet.

c. I read 90% of the pages of this material with one period. This shows that I can improve my speed of reading.

str. 3.1113

It is a very good story in that the words are easily understandable but the story is not so much interesting. It does not attract the readers.

str. 3.1114

a. While I was reading this story, I was not fast. It took me two periods. I tried to know the story by heart. Now I know its full story. Specially I lost much time in the exercise which is found at the end of the book. Totally there was no new words. The story, sentence construction and general idea was simple.

b. The material that I read was interesting. The way I read was in a better condition than before. While I was reading I was looking for general ideas in order to understand the story. Now I remember the story.

c. The only problem - the name of places, names are new.

str. 3.1115

a. This story is my first reading of the year because I was all occupied on the text alone. I could see a very exciting situation. I focus on everything in the story, looking for general ideas.

b. I have read the stories looking for general ideas. For a moment, I could see no reasons for the problems I have faced through reading these short stories. I am sure of I will manage myself through this problem using this a very exciting chance.

str. 3.1116

a. When I read it (i.e., by reading) it took me so much time. It is not the problem ... but in order to clearly ... understand the story I made repeaton.

str. 3.1117

a. In fact, I like the material and I read it in a medium speed so as to enable me to have the whole history and the duty of each character in my mind. Finally, I got the general ideas and I can remember it now and for the future.

b. I read it as much fast as I can and try to summarize the general stories of the book. It is a little bit harder to remember the activities of each character. The book is not as interesting as I evaluated above and I cannot remember the whole stories in the book.
c. The book is interesting and I read it as fast as I can. I can remember most of the story. When I read it and concentrate on looking g for the general ideas, I understood what lazy students do during examination and I take a lesson from it.

d. I read it in a medium speed so that I can understand the whole story and the grammatical context of different words and phrases. I like the material and I remember most of the story even if it is not the whole.

str.3.1118

a. As I understood how I read, at the beginning I read it quietly just to understand the story. I didn't focus on words meaning or grammar. But later on I start to read medium manner to enable me to focus on words meaning, grammar usage and the story at the same time. To put in a nutshell if I read repetitively I hope I will progress. But now it is not enough to evaluate myself.

b. I have progressed in fast reading than before. I focused only on the story w/o vague saying, but the grammar usage couldn't understand w/o slow reading. In general I could understand what the story narrates.

c. Actually, I liked the reading class. Since I started reading I have made a bit progress in speed. In the first time I read slowly but later a bit faster than before. I focused only in the contextual meaning of the words and the general idea of the story.

d. I liked the material. I could also read faster and grasp the idea of the story. I focused on the construction of the sentences and the usage of the words. But this is not enough to compete myself with those Anglo mania students. That is the matter of background.

str. 3.1119

a. It is easy to read and understand. The general idea is simple. ... The meaning of some words, even though I couldn't define I thought that I can get from the general idea.

b. As it was level 4 the words were, some of them hard. They were difficult to understand. But any one could understand when he read strictly and when he finished the story.

str. 3.1120

In reading this book and others I got fast reading with understanding and words

what I don't know before.

str. 3.1121

a. ... When I read the book I am amazed several times because of the many expressions which I faced when I read Amharic as well as English novels. The author of the book was very popular [Charles Dickens] with English readers, even in most parts of the world that is why I appreciate his grammatical expression of events.

b. I understand the story of this book although I can't remember all the story in detail. I am really enjoyed by reading this book. It has many interesting parts which has some contribution to read fast and get the end. There are some difficulties in expression, vocabulary. In my opinion, these expressions are modern spoken English so from this we procure much knowledge.

c. The story is easy to understand. There are no complex expressions or heavy vocabulary. It is really interesting story and can remember the most important of the story. There is no any expressions which are not understandable. The story is too short and simple to finish it within one period. I thank the author of this book who wrote for the sake of us to improve our English capacity.

d. Reading such kind of books for me gives two important things; these are knowing about that particular job, such as fishing and get improving our reading capacity. To be frank, it is better to read books in laboratories and study the textbook in our homes because the text almost gives no more additional knowledge in grammatical aspect except in some cases.

str. 3.1122

a. My major concern was to know the general ideas of the story and to know how the grammatical rules are put in practice.

b. Here I focused on the main points and I tried to understand the general idea of the story. To some extent I also tried to know the meaning of some words.

str. 3.1123

a. The story is so much interesting. My speed of reading is not improved very well. But I have made a gradual improvement. I think, I have got an advantage to solve my problem of reading from this program. I can remember the main parts of the story at this moment. When I read I focus on words and syntax. I read by looking for general ideas.

b. The story of Chaplin is very much interesting. I have got a little progression in my speed of reading. I can remember the main parts of the story except most of the names which are mentioned there. I focus on the words and syntax. I read by looking for the general ideas of the story.

str. 3.1124

a. Here also I found some difficulty in remembering the names of places and

persons but I solved the problem by taking down the names of places and persons.

b. The book is interesting, moreover, it help me on speeding my reading. Here I found that taking down all the names of places and persons unnecessary and concentrate on the important ones only for my report.
c. This book is the largest in volume of all I read. Here I found some words which I don't know and I tried to guess their meaning according to their usage in the book.

str. 3.1125

a. I didn't enjoy the story just because I didn't understand it. I didn't understand the story because I was in a dilemma - whether to listen to the speaker and understand the story or to read the book and understand it. I was just hearing but not listening and I was just looking at the words but not understanding. This condition made me unable to retain any idea from the stories.

b. I was able to follow the story much better than the previous period. My attention was on the meaning and the idea of a sentence. I somewhat interested in the story because I was in a good concentration (without the disturbance of the reader) and I managed to understand the story. This fact helped me to retain some general points of the story.

c. I enjoyed the material very much. I read this book in a better speed than the previous one because I learned that I should focus on the overall idea of the story (After the suggestion of the teacher). This fact also helped me to retain relatively well. As to the vocabulary, I had no problem with any word except the difficulty of reading foreign names.

d. In addition to the above progress, I also gained a slight development in speed. At the first part of my reading, I read 20 pages (per period) and in the second part I was managed to read 24 pages.

e. I was in a state to appreciate the story; I read faster (30 pages); I focused on the general ideas of the story; I was able to tell the story that I had read better than before ; I got some new vocabularies (including the title)

f. I was very much interested in the story; The story is wider and somewhat difficult to retain; I am much interested in the succession of the events and I unconsciously learned to predict phenomena; I have no trouble with words.

g. I was managed to read almost 40 pages; I was very much absorbed when I read (This is really great progress to me than before); I could read with fixed head and lips since I was able to concentrate.

str. 3.1126

a. I appreciate the whole message of the text and liked it very much but as it is a little bit longer story I fear that I might have misunderstood it. Anyway I have a good idea about this passage that is about its clarity and comprehensibility of the

grammatical construction.

b. I liked the material with no exception and hesitation. And in reading I have not that much problem but as for remembrance there are many things which troubled me. To point the most important one: the names of places and foreigners. I always try to focus on meaning of the expression from the context and looking for the general idea of the passage.

str. 3.1127

a.My main problem is to read fast. I read each paragraph two time in order to understand the content. Still I can't get advice how I can tackle my problem.

b. When I read the book I had met with new hard words. I took some measure to tackle this problems, that is estimating the meaning of the word from the context.

c. The story which I have read is very interesting but it is laborious to remember the names of the persons in the context. Numerous persons involved in the story and it is difficult to memorize their names easily.

str. 3.1128

a. I read this book being very much interested in the story. I finished reading this book in the first 50 minutes but for more understanding I repeated once and now I remember all the story.

b. It is a very interesting story however it is written in a very simple language that I couldn't boost any vocabulary. Moreover the story is not some what complex so that every body can got the idea very easily.

str. 3.1129

a. This book is very interesting since it is about a known town, London. Though the names are very difficult to remember after reading, the whole thing about London is very good. Some words are difficult to understand but as I progress to read I know their meaning without problem.

str. 3.1130

a. I really progress my reading ability i.e. to read fast with understanding. In this I like stronger these programme. I read faster than the other time and remember so many things. And I focus on what the writer want to describe. In this book the words are so easy. Therefore the syntax is well.

str. 3.1131

a. It has some difficult words. But I could understand it by looking the general idea. By now I have been increasing my speed of reading.

str. 3.1132

a. The book is very interesting and I liked it. Since it is very interesting I read very fast. When I am reading I focused on the construction of the sentences and the detail of the idea and the main point about the passage.

str. 3.1133

a. I personally improve not only the speed of reading but also in understanding what the story is about particularly the cruxes of the story are in a position to be remembered because of the emphasis I give to it. As much as possible I attempt to know the meanings from the phrases.
b. My reading speed is, in my opinion, in progress. The story particularly the surprising parts are supposed to be remembered. I attempt to know the general ideas by following the chain like story and by understanding the intention of the story. From the context of the story I can guess the meaning.

c. In general I have improved my reading ability not only in speed but also in understanding. The story is interesting. I remember much particularly on the part I emphasize. I guess some words to know their meaning from the context.

str. 3.1134

a. ... I am very fast in reading in English unless I get difficult words. I can remember three-fourth of what I read. When I read fiction I focus on meaning of the sentences and looking for general idea.

str. 3.1135

a. The book was very interesting, and I think I am reading faster now concentrating on the general ideas of the story.

b. Now I am reading faster in a relaxed manner and concentrating on the main points. I enjoyed and understood the story thoroughly. I think I will do much better next time.

c. I think I am really progressing. At first I could read only 20 pages in a session but now I can read more than forty pages and understand and enjoy what I am reading. I am now concentrating on the main points of the reading.

d. This is the longest of the stories I have read up to now. But I think I was able to understand and enjoy every chapter of it. I think this is a clear indication of my progress in reading. As usual I am concentrating on the main points.

str. 3.1136

a. While I read the material given, I faced many problems. I can read fast but I can't remember the story which I read thoroughly and I have a problem of understanding because of lack of words, syntax and meaning of the words and sentences. While I read I focus on the general ideas and the meaning of the words.

b. Now I see the progress in my reading. If it continues I hope I might develop my reading and comprehension ability. But my problem still is remembering

capacity. After reading I can't recall the whole story I read. The other major problem is making report. I had better write than made speech. When I started to talk, I become confused and my body starts to shake. Please it you have a remedy for this please give me a piece of advice.

str. 3.1137

a. Although I was not experienced before to read more story (fictions) this time onwards I was interested to read more, therefore this leads me to know more knowledge. Due to this reason my reading and understanding develop from day to day.

str. 3.1138

a. I can say I am speedy enough when I read books and also I like too much all the material which I have read, and also I remember it since the books are very interesting stories. But the words are very simple and I focus on all general story of the book or looking for general ideas.

str. 3.1139

a. It is a very helpful way of learning English. The story was very interesting and the words are not so difficult so I could understand the story easily. It helped me to read faster according to the cassette.

b. I was understanding all the words while I was reading it but I couldn't write the story in short as clearly as it was to me; because it is very complicated to summarize. Any way, I have got a good improvement in my reading and understanding the words easily according to the story without using a dictionary.

str. 3.1140

a. While I was reading the material it was very interesting for its simple grammatical usage, simple words. This helped to understand what the story talks about. Sinc · the story attracts attention there was expectation what comes following this and so on. Even though some words are difficult from the context I was able to give their meaning by doing this I was able to improve reading even though I don't feel much.

str. 3.1141

a. In reading the story I get enough knowledge and reading ability I got remember easily the given story's and also I focus on the ability of the boy how to improve his life. The words are not difficult so much at this level also the syntax are also better and the meaning simple. After I listened the cassette I repeat it. Generally it is good to improve my language and the main points are the social behaviour of the human being.

str. 3.1142

a. The book was not used difficult words but it used only by simple words. The story when I read up to page 20 was very interested.

str. 3.1143

a. In general, and frankly speaking, I have enjoyed this semester's English classes. As a foreign learner of the English language I found very interesting and helpful the classes spent in the laboratory. I reading I have concentrated mainly on the ideas and the main points of the story not on names of people etc. In brief, I think these classes should be continued and practised throughout the University because it is through reading that one improves his language skills. Not only his vocabulary but also his grammar and so, in the long run one may find it easier to speak with others in proper English.

str. 3.1144

a. I like the reading material; it is very interesting. I remember the main story and the place or persons or things it revolves around. I focus on words and meanings to understand.

str. 3.1145

a. When I read this book, I wasn't this much interested because the same names are repeated now and then. I read ir in a medium speed and took the general idea of the story.

b. When I read this book, I read it very fast with understanding because it's written using simple words. Some of the names are new to me, however, they didn't create any difficulty in reading since I read for general ideas.

c. I got this programme very good because I progress my reading ability as well as conceptualization of the main idea of the story. And I think this programme will be effective if it continues.

str. 3.1146

a. I liked the materials, I can remember most of the story. I read looking for general ideas.

Appendix 3.12 Reports of students in the main study

str. 3.121

After this pro ramme, I improved so many things such as I give a great attention to pronounce words; I use dictionary when I face a new word; I try to speak with my friends to improve my speech; I try to grasp some knowledge when I read any important book and so on.

str. 3.122

a. I want to suggest that there are persons who want to spend more time in the lab; ... please can you add time to those persons? and you can improve also the freshman students' ability by listening comprehension from the radio and conversations, pronunciation system by discussing in a programmed way.

str. 3.123

a. I think this programme is very good for the improvement of our language studies; but we can't know the words or the new vocabularies from the text. If we can be given a short time to pick the words up.

b. I have got many advantages from this programme such as reading time improvement and how to solve problems of the passage.

str. 3.124

a. I would like to suggest that it should be continued in a better way by giving different asking ways other than the previous one.

b. I have learnt different words and I have attained some advantages how to read fast as possible as I can.

str. 3.125

I have improved my reading speed and my tactic in answering the comprehension and also my vocabulary.

str. 3.126

I am improve our skill development of how to read the passage; how to find the meaning in the passage and how can read the passage in a short time and understand and so on.

str. 3.127

a. I improved my reading skill.
b. I made myself rich in vocabulary.
c. I practised knowing the meaning of words in their context rather than referring in the dictionary.
d. I know doing questions with certain limited time.

str. 3.128

It is very important for us to develop our reading skill within a short period of

time and also it is helpful for further study to complete the passage in a short time.

str. 3.129

a. I am improving so many important clues in this programme such as the slowness of reading the comprehension part of the passage; Likewise I am improving the way of doing the questions and interpretation of the words.

b. As to my understanding this programme is very important because I feel the wholeness ... of expression and how I use word translation and also I am improving ... doing the vocabulary and comprehension questions. So, ... I am successful in my participation of this programme.

str. 3.1210

The programme helps me to facilitate my reading speed. With the help of this programme, I am able to read the passage within a short period of time not only in English but also for other subjects.

str. 3.1211

I get many advantage from the programme. Before this reading comprehension programme, I did not like reading comprehension specially in the exams of my previous classes and I did the comprehension questions by guessing but now I am interesting to read any English comprehension and text books and in addition I improves my reading speed.

str. 3.1212

a. I improve my reading ability.
b. I know so many words which are useful in my future reading passage.

str. 3.1213

Before this programme I hate comprehension. Now I like and know many words from the vocabulary part and also I improve speed of reading comprehension; so I like the programme.

str. 3.1214

a. If we had time to revise what we read, we would learn more from our mistakes. If possible try to arrange possible time to recheck what we did.

b. I have got many advantages from this programme. Some of these are how to use time on examination; how words could be used in texts and how the meaning varied according to its usage.

str. 3.1215

The passages are so interesting and the way they ask questions both the above mentioned impressed me.
It helps me by improving my vocabulary skills, in an overworked phrases and passage understanding.

str. 3.1216

a. When I was given the cards and the answer key I read the cards first and try to answer without seeing the answer key. After that I made correction in my work sheet ... . But when I went in my home and want to study, I will not get the question since it was not given to take to our home.

b. Before I started this reading programme in the laboratory, I was poor in reading comprehension but now I become progressed in this course and I gain advantage by practising every day. But why I want to leave for the next semester as I indicated in no. 3e (above) is that when I learn here in the laboratory the normal class i.e., the Freshman English course is retarded and I fear, the exam since the exam comprises mostly from that book and that book which is prepared for Freshman English course needs an assistant and takes time, I supposed that I lagged behind the other students in that case.

str. 3.1217

Advantage I got from the programme is mainly realization of my poor reading skill and also I tried to improve it.

str. 3.1218

I have learned many new words and improved my grammar.

str. 3.1219

a. I would like to see in the programme to write the essays and short stories that are at the end of the cards. Writing essays is one of the most important methods to improve the linguistic ability.

b. I have got many advantages from the programme to improve my reading and to speed up my reading, working exercise. ... I will try to do more for the next time in school and out of school.

str. 3.1220

What I would like to suggest is that if there could be a programme that can be arranged for us for our better improvements in grammar because we think we know ... but I think we're far beyond that.

str. 3.1221

a. It will be good if much of our time is not limited to it. It will be better if we have also some more time for the Freshman English exercise book.

b. Of course, I have got some advantages of reading fast in a few minutes and getting the meaning of words.

str. 3.1222

In my opinion it is a good way of learning and it helps me to understand English easily and it participate me more.

str. 3.1223

I get from the programme, improving my vocabulary and comprehension and

improving reading speed.

str. 3.1224

I got the adv ntage from my reading some vocabulary and the method how to grasp passage. In addition to that ... the use the grammatical and structural words.

str. 3.1225

a. the grammar and usage parts necessary.
b. phrasal verbs is necessary
c. more than 25 words each day.

str. 3.1226

It will be good if much of our time is not limited to it. It will be better if we also some more time for the Freshman English book.

str. 3.1227

I like the programme if it were once a week and allot more time on Freshman book of English 101B for next semester.

str. 3.1228

-It is necessary to add the structure and usage of English
-It is necessary and phrases, phrasal verbs and so on in the programme.

str. 3.1229

I got the experience of writing and reading speed and also knowing of general notion of the cards at once. Also I know various verbs and words as well.

str. 3.1230

a. Though it is an enjoyable programme from the many points of view it would be advisable if some changes are made; for instance, the time is too short to do all the questions; we start doing the lab after a considerable time is wasted.

b. It is an interesting programme that needs encouragement. It enables me to grasp as many words as I can; besides that, it is of great significance as to the improvement of the time needed.

str. 3.1231

Of course, the lab work was good and I can say that it had helped me in understanding things by relating ideas. But the discussion period was not as such good. At the beginning when its groupings were arranged according to their colour, according to their skill level it was good. But later the groups were arranged in roll no. alphabetically. But generally the programme was good.

str. 3.1232

Actually, the programme is so interesting and helpful as we show a progress in our work, specially reading ability (speed) and vocabulary part. In addition to that if we do the composition part "write your story" we can improve our basic problem of composition.

str. 3.1233

The programme has helped me examine my ability and correct my weak parts especially it has helped me to improve my reading speed and comprehension. I have also added a lot of words to my stock of vocabulary.

str. 3.1234

Because of my studying in this programme some important parts from the FLEn became clear, so it is advantageous for us.

str. 3.1235

The time devoted to lab must be decreased and more time must be employed in discussion.

I got the advantages of improving my reading practice and I know many new words and the experience of doing comprehension exercises.

str. 3.1236

It helped me to improve my skill of comprehension and vocabulary and to study other subjects.

str. 3.1237

I have improved my English: how to read and understand certain passages and how to answer questions that follow passages, etc.

str. 3.1238

I want to see more time to discussion.

str. 3.1239

... It helped me to read faster. It also helped me to keep my attention on what I was reading so that I could understand better. It helped me to increase my reading thinking skill and helped me to improve my knowledge of word meaning and my ability to master new words.

str. 3.1240

a. I suggest that more time be given for the reading programme and constant help from the instructors.

b. I got many advantages from the reading programmes. In addition to improving my reading ability. In the process of reading I got so many general knowledge from the passages.

str. 3.1241

From the programme I got many advantages. I improved my reading habit, I experienced doing exams, understanding comprehension questions and so on.

str. 3.1242

... we had better have more discussion periods on the Freshman text books to have a better understanding of language and better pronunciation as well.

str. 3.1243

a. It is better if students who belong to the same power builder are grouped together to avoid the problem of distribution of cards. It is also better if students have time to take down important words.

b. The programme helped m a lot in my examinations and improving my vocabulary.

str. 3.1244

a. In my opinion some group leaders are either careless or have no ability to co-ordinate the group and motivate it; therefore it is better if our instructor controls how the discussion is going on.

b. This programme is advantageous in that I can acquire knowledge about many things outside the course in Freshman book and I hope I will get this chance in second semester.

str. 3.1245

As to me I am very delighted with this programme. And I am able to improve my comprehension and vocabulary standard.

str. 3.1246

The very good thing I got from this programme is I can say it is immeasurable. I developed my knowledge of vocabulary, spelling and reading speed. Therefore I would like to have this programme next semester.

str. 3.1247

I got many advantages from the programme. Some of them are 1) I improved my ability of answering comprehension questions; 2) I improved my understanding of the meaning of words contextually 3) I know the meaning of many words.

str. 3.1248

The programme was nice but it interrupts my study by making me busy.

str. 3.1249

I get much more advantage from the programme like improvement of fast reading and the unde: standing of the main idea in a short time.

str. 3.1250

The programme helped me to read better and to increase reading speed: how to grasp the main idea from the reading article and sequence of action. The answers card helps me to learn much better from mistakes.

str. 3.1251

I have got much from the programme. Before the beginning of the programme I was poor in my reading as well as on my understanding of English language. But now I am able to read and understand better.

str. 3.1252

The programme helped me to improve my reading speed and my ability in increasing the understanding of what I read.

str. 3.1253

I got some advantages from the lab specially on how I could answer questions that are (derived) from a passage.

str. 3.1254

The reading materials had done a lot in my reading improvement and understanding. In my opinion, it has not any limitation and I would like to continue this way.

str. 3.1255

This programme is very important and interesting to me not only in my Freshman English but also to study other subjects and this programme helps me to improve my standard of English. It is better to have the same programme for next semester.

str. 3.1256

It is really good and I can say I have improved my skills in vocabulary, comprehension questions and also my rate in understanding the general concept of the passage.

str. 3.1257

To be truthful, I have not observed a weak point on the programme. It is very interesting and I agree if it continues as it is.

I have really improved my vocabulary capacity and it has also enabled me to understand the statements that I read in a better way.

str. 3.1258

a. Most of the questions are related, that is, the types of the questions in the cards are the same and we use the same method always, which will make this programme a little bit boring sometimes.

b. I appreciate this programme very much because it helps me to improve my vocabulary, reading time and the time and method of doing the exercise.

str. 3.1259

I have improved my speed of reading and partly my skill of grasping word meaning. It gives a better understanding of sentences (grammar).

str. 3.1260

Of course, I got a great improvement in doing comprehension and understanding the passage by reading once. And at the same time I lost the words which I must know from the text book. Because I am not interested (used to?) to study before the teacher discussed it.

str. 3.1261

The reading programme has given me the opportunity of developing my reading rate, comprehending level and vocabulary.

str. 3.1262

a. ... The programme we are using is good in general but regarding the discussion programme it has to be changed in such a way that we can cover the text as early as possible and I beg you to explain us some structures the same to what you did last week.

b. The advantage I have got from the programme is really very much and for that matter I have enjoyed it. To mention some of the advantages I have got: improving reading skill, developing vocabulary, speed of reading, and of course some important experiences from the stories of the passages. I wish we proceed in this way.

str. 3.1263

The reading lab has contributed a substantial ... to me in my vocabulary and comprehension. It has also helped me to see things in different ways in comprehension questions besides, the idiomatic expressions of words in some of the exercise cards are which I most appreciate - a thousand thanks for who planned this to young freshman students of this campus.

str. 3.1264

From this programme I have got many advantages, that is, I improve my reading speed and conscious understanding. So it is helpful for me.

str. 3.1265

It helps us to improve our speed in using the examination in time allowed and we know some new words.

str. 3.1266

a. I think most of the students, including myself, do not understand the real purpose of the programme. Then if it is declared the purpose of the programme to the students, we may take the programme seriously.

b. I think I got some vocabulary and know some stories of the world. And I think I improve my reading and working speed above all.

str. 3.1267

I haven't taught well in discussion period please change the programme of learn with teacher help as in the beginning of the semester.

str. 3.1268

Now I became a good speedy reader and also I have got also knowledge the way how to read and comprehend the passage.

str. 3.1269

a. On my behalf I appreciate those who conduct this program. But since most of us do not have good background in English in our high school study, it is sometimes difficult to understand foreign compositions (stories written by foreigners). So it is good for those of us who have faced the same problem as I do to have a domestic composition.

b. Even if this programme has been conducted for a short period of time I have

gained the following advantages: 1) I have improved my speed of reading and doing comprehension questions. 2) I have learnt many new words 3) It also helps me in improving my writing.

str. 3.1270

Among the advantages I have got from the programme the basic one is the concentration case. Before I start this programme I have a very great problem in concentrate on the basic ideas of the reading material but now I have shown a considerable improvement in this problem.

str. 3.1271

I got several advantages from the programme. First of all it helped me to improve my skill of faster reading and how I can read with full attention. The SQ3R points in the booklet helped me how can I get the overall meaning of the text and how can I co ncentrate on the details of the content.

str. 3.1272

The main advantage I have got from the programme is how to improve my reading skills. I have known how faster I have to read to do a certain passage, how to adjust my time (speed?) of reading with the time given.

str. 3.1273

... it helps me to read quickly and to improve my ability to do comprehension and I get new words from it which are important for my day to day life.

str. 3.1274

I am really enjoying as well as learning much from this learning approach. I have also improved my comprehension ability.

str. 3.1275

The program was unique by its nature. I did it with full confidence and freedom. I improved my reading. I came to analyze how to guess at word meanings without referring the dictionary. Although no such freedom on examination thanks to the programmers success is with me.

str. 3.1276

1) I improved in reading speed. 2) I knew how to allocate time. 3) I learned many words and different styles. 4) I learned how to evaluate my results. Generally, I gained so many things from the programme. I enjoyed it very much.

str. 3.1277

In fact I develop my vocabulary knowledge but on the other hand it has no any connection with the text (Freshman English text book?)

str. 3.1279

Since I have read many different cards based on different ideas, now I am interested in reading many books written in English on different topics. Before I started this lab work I do not want so much to read history books, literature

written in English but after this work I am interested.

str. 3.1280

a. If it is possible the reading material content needs some arrangements; that means the passage part is not related to our daily life, the culture, history or other activities which we can face in our daily life; therefore please, try to prepare the reading materials in relation to our country.
b. Through the reading materials I got some of the vocabularies in my Freshman programme and the habits of other countries manners, language relations, etc.

str. 3.1281

I have gained a lot of knowledge from the passages I have read and this has enabled me to acquire new vocabularies. It has enabled me to have a profound knowledge about grammar and structure.

str. 3.1282

I would like to suggest our programme is very nice but for our exam do not help because these laboratory would help us for other knowledge to grow our read tendency.

str. 3.1283

a. As many of grasped a great deal of knowledge especially reading fast and confronting various vocabulary items I would like to appreciate this programme. Moreover, my opinion is that if the students are exposed to debate and open discussion, they would improve (their ability in?) the language.
b. I have broadened my lexical range from this programme; in addition to this, reading fast and relating what I read from general or previous knowledge is what I gained from this programme.

str. 3.1284

The advantage I got from the programme is that I know new words but I haven't studied the Freshman text book.

str. 3.1285

The mere (?) exposure to successive passage reading comprehension has reduced the uncomfortable feelings that I used to have during comprehension work in actual exams.

str. 3.1286

a. In my opinion, to improve the programme, the instructor should evaluate the students day to day activity. If the student work is high, the instructor should encourage him/her. If the student task is low, the instructor should help him/her in what way the problem could be solved.
b. It is the first time that this kind of programme encountered me. So I am very much impressed. The advantage I got from the programme is that I have experienced how to read and the speed I take from the passage. And in addition to this, I have got some improvement on the vocabulary part.

str. 3.1287

The advantage that I got from this program: I have experienced how to read.

str. 3.1288

a.1) Now I know more words than before. 2) I developed reading books with concentration. 3) I can differentiate the main information from the passage immediately. 4) I improved my speed. 5) I know interesting history from the passages which I read. 6) I also know how questions are derived from the passage.
b. ... before students begin to work such a lab work if the instructor gives them some reading techniques I am sure they can improve their grasping things ability more than expected.

str. 3.1288

I suggest that for the future it is better to learn each day by the teacher rather than discussing one other among the class students. Therefore, the teacher should attribute to some extent participate in the class.

str. 3.1289

1) I know how to go over passages in order to answer the comprehension questions having applied the SQ3R method. 2) Of second importance it helped me in developing my vocabulary. These are not all. The promise (hope?) I write for myself at the end of the lab programme which has a great importance for me, made me confident in writing my feeling. In addition it has helped me much in giving me the method of timing myself.

str. 3.1290

a. In fact, it is a very good and interesting programme. We were spending the time almost on reading. I and almost all the students who were attending this programme got a very great advantage on reading skill; but if we now continue with listening (more time for listening) we'll be good at both reading and listening.
b. Of course, I have got many advantages from this programme. First of all, I improved my reading speed and the power of my understanding the meaning of words (vocabulary part). It also helps me to understand the general sense of the text, magazine and newspaper immediately. Moreover, I have shown much improvement on my examinations.

str. 3.1291

Even though the programme is advantageous, it is better to have the same time arrangement with that of discussion. Otherwise, we cannot finish (go through) the text book. And, as the examination comprises all parts of the text, we may not succeed in it unless we go through the text book.

str. 3.1292

a. After all this time of participating in this programme I still do not notice the significant change I made. I suggest that it will be advantageous if you inform us about our developments and advise us to make a greater progress.
b. I've read interesting things and found new words.

str. 3.1293

There are many advantages. Among them one of the most important is from the laboratory class which I got the use of time (meaning), speed increase: in a short period of time how to work more and more questions and how to use or to know the meaning of the words. From the discussion class, it is mostly focused on Freshman English and how to use pronunciation, preposition, structure and usage and so on.

Appendix 3.2 Staff reports at the end of the main study

Instructor 3.21

1. Yes, I was involved in the study. Yes, I took it as my own because I was convinced that my students were benefitting a lot from the experimental study.

2. The procedure that each student was made to depend on his own ability and things on his own interest and speed of work interested me very much.

3. It was difficult for the students to time their reading speed in the reading chart, but it was necessary to evaluate the improvement of their reading speed.

4. I believe it has quite a lot since my participation in the study.

5. 1) It gives each learner to pace according to his speed and ability.
   2) It gives the student a chance to evaluate and improve his comprehension, vocabulary, etc.

6. The attitude of the students towards an independent individual work was a sort of a drawback at the beginning because the students were used to the lecture method in their previous lessons.

7. The emphasis of the methodology was on self-discovery and independent work. I think it is the best method for teaching reading because it gives students the chance to learn things by themselves. It helps individuals to develop interest.

8. Yes, it narrows the alleged gap between students' reading ability and the academic requirements because it helps students to develop their comprehension easily; increases the size of their vocabulary and equips them with better techniques of reading.

9. At the beginning the students were counting words in isolation rather than reading them in sense groups. They did not know how to skim over a reading passage to extract the necessary information. They rather read all the words and sentences equally without making any discrimination based on their importance.

10. No, they were rather worried that they were going to fail. In fact, they were reluctant at the beginning to continue with the procedure. But after a few weeks, they became enthusiasts with the procedure and finally scored remarkable grades.

11. No doubt, I had some fear whether my students were going to pass the examination at the beginning, but after some time it became clear to me that they were going to pass the examination.

12. At the beginning the students didn't believe at all that they were going to

benefit anything out of the experiment but at the end, they were happy to see that they were benefiting a lot from the study.

13. Well, it would be difficult to adopt this methodology without preparing relevant as well as adequate reading materials that students can work out independently. It is also important to convince individual instructors that this methodology is a very effective way of teaching language.

14. The results of the students who were in the study group were extremely higher than those who were in the control group.

15. I believe, it would be useful if a seminar can be organized to brief our teaching staff about the usefulness of the methodology applied during the study. The participant instructors can take part in the discussion. This could lead to the application of the methodology in the Department eventually.

Instructor 3.22

1. Yes, I did feel involved and took it as my own because I was eager to know the result.

2. The idea of inculcating individual responsibility on the part of the students as well as the opportunity given for extensive reading interested me more.

3. I think the timing was a bit short and inconvenient. Well, it had to fit into the unit timing (schedule).

4. Not much though, owing to the shortage of the study period.

5. a) more exposure to reading materials (extensive reading)
b) more exercise in comprehension and speed.
c) consideration of individual ability (background)

6. 1) time constraint
2) genuine co-operation on the part of tutors as well as co-ordinators

7. I think the main emphasis is on self-discipline on the part of the learner; extensive reading based on well graded materials.

8. I do believe because students are given extra advantage.

9. At the beginning most of them were very slow but towards the end of the study they managed to read faster with improved comprehension.

10. This is difficult to determine.

11. Honestly, I was a bit scared initially but as we proceeded I felt more confident.

12. At the beginning some were obviously worried but in the end most of them seemed to like it.

13. (no response)

14. If my memory serves me correct the results of the study group proved to be more clustered and even better than the control group.

15. (no respo ;se)

Instructor 3.23

1. Yes, I did. I was very much interested in the effect that the study would produce.

2. I was interested particularly in the fact that each member of the study group worked on their own, individually. The procedure catered for individual differences which is usually a difficult thing to put into practice.

3. One difficulty was that the participants did not have time to share their experiences of the lab when they went to their usual classroom. This could have helped them to develop more interest and to feel more responsible for the lab work.

4. A lot. It seems to me that what our students at university need very much is the exposure to a variety of reading materials and skills like in the study.

5. a)Students worked on their own and progressed at their own pace. (b) Students had the opportunity to see and evaluate their own progress. (c) They were exposed to a variety of skills which they certainly need for their academic reading.

6. One point in this regard is that the study should have continued for a longer period of time to see the effect of the methodology clearly.

7. I think the main emphasis of the methodology is to develop students reading skills. I feel that this is a very useful methodology particularly for our university students who are mostly engaged in reading for academic purposes.

8. Yes, I do because reading is a skill that is developed through reading and exposure to a variety of exercises as in the study. This, I think, will help them in tackling any reading task.

9. Generally, when students read, they struggle with language bits, mainly vocabulary items rather than getting the ideas in the parts or the whole of the text which they read. It is difficult to say whether there was a significant change or not in such a short period.

10. It is difficult to say what they felt at the early stages of the study although there was no lack of interest in the lab work throughout the semester. Of course, there was also the one-hour class work which raised their confidence about passing their examination.

11. I never felt that they would not pass their exam because I felt they would really benefit from the procedure, which I think is much better than the practice we are following.

12. Almost all of them liked it and their interests in the study went on developing throughout the semester.

13. It is a bit premature to suggest revisions and improvements at that stage.

14. This is difficult to say as I don't have any control group in the regular programme. But there was a marked difference compared with my extension groups, the study group being better achievers.

15. As I have pointed out, the methodology has much to offer for our students. Only ways of integrating it into the existing system should be sought.

Instructor 3.24

1. I did feel that I was involved in the study and took it as my own because being involved in this new activity made me feel that I will be capable to supervise the experiment.

2. Greater responsibility fell on the students themselves and I enjoyed checking their work periodically to see whether they had progressed.

3. Some students were unable to go through the exercises allotted for the given period, and therefore failed to draw the graphs which are however very important as they allow them to see how much they had progressed.

4. Now, that I have participated in this study conducted on reading, I feel that reading is very essential in teaching English. Through reading we can at the same time teach vocabulary, grammar and writing.

5. It has helped to develop self-reliance in the students, given them the opportunity to build up their vocabulary and their writing ability.

6. The methodology helps to develop the writing and reading skills. The listening part had been left out due to certain difficulties. The reading cards contain texts from works of some well-known writers, mostly British, American or European. There was nothing included from African literature.

7. The main emphasis is supposed to be on reading, writing and listening skills, but we have to be aware that speaking is also an important aspect. I do subscribe to the methodology.

8. Yes, it does. This is because the purpose of English courses is to enable students to read and understand the texts they will be required to read for the different courses at university.

9. The less experienced students had to read each and every line of texts but those who had previous experience in reading were skimming through the text and were able to finish the work on time.

10. At the beginning, there was some doubt in most of them, but in the end the majority enjoyed the work. I even noticed that many regretted that they were not able to continue with the experiment during semester 2.

11. I had no such feeling at the initial stage because I was well aware that the present Freshman English text is not adequate as it centres on teaching grammar structures outside a context which would have made it mor meaningful. In the end, I also felt that the study was very useful.

12. The majority had great enthusiasm because they were going to do something different. Few of them were hostile till the end of the study because they felt they were going to fail.

13. The same methodology could be used to meet our objectives provided there is careful selection of materials related to the students cultural exposure and educational needs.

14. Unfortunately, I had no control group and am unable to contrast them. However, I could notice gradual improvement in the writing skills of the study group I had.

15. After the experience I had with this experiment on reading it makes me feel almost ashamed to have to teach a Freshman English text which does not contribute anything to the students' reading, writing and speaking skills.

Appendix 4 **Reading Comprehension Tests** (taken from University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate **First Certificate in English**)

Appendix 4.1 **Reading Comprehension Test 1**

In this section you will find after each of the passages a number of questions or unfinished statements about the passage, each with four suggested answers or ways of finishing. You must choose the one which you think fits best. Give one answer only to each question. Read each passage through before choosing your answers.

FIRST PASSAGE

Having escaped from the boat unseen, I swam feebly towards the shore. I could see I was not going to reach the sandy beach. The current was taking me to the left hand side of the bay, where there were trees with rocks below them.

I was beginning to think I would never get there when I suddenly realised that I could no longer see for miles along the coast. I had at last got within the arms of the bay. When I looked back I couldn't see the boat.

There was a strip of concrete set into the rocks ahead of me at the water's edge as an aid to bathers. I managed to reach it. It was a flat step, set only inches above the water. There was nothing to get a grip on. Just a step. I put one hand flat on it and, with an effort, got up onto it on my stomach. My heart was beating hard with effort and fear in equal measures. Desperation took me to hands and knees and set me crawling up the rocks to find shelter.

I managed to climb up about six feet of loose rocks and found a slight hollow, half full of water. I rolled into it and lay there breathing hard, hopelessly exhausted. It was then that I heard the sound of a boat engine, growing steadily louder.

They must have seen me climbing out of the sea, I thought. Yet if I'd stayed at the water's edge they would have found me just as surely. The boat approached. I kept my head down. They were going to have to come and get me, and if I could raise enough breath, I would shout until some of the people on the beach took notice, except that they were far enough away to think it was all a game.

The engine died suddenly and silence fell.

26. What was the man hoping to do when he escaped from the boat?

A. get to the beach
B. swim across the bay
C. gain the shelter of the trees
D. let the current carry him out of sight

27. When the man realised he could not see as much of the coast as before, he knew that

A. he was beginning to lose consciousness.
B. the boat was a long way off.
C. he was nearer the shore than he had imagined.
D. he must have been swimming in the wrong direction.

28. It was difficult for the man to get out of the sea because

A. the steps up the rock were broken.
B. he was too frightened to act calmly.
C. there was nothing to hold on to.
D. there were sharp rocks beneath the surface.

29. Why did he roll into the hollow?

A. He didn't want to be seen by people on the beach.
B. He was afraid of the people in the boat.
C. He wanted to get clear of the loose rocks.
D. It contained water which he could drink.

30. When the man heard a boat approaching, he thought that

A. he should have stayed in the sea.
B. he had hidden just in time.
C. it would be difficult for anyone to reach him.
D. he would probably soon be found.

31. As he waited in his hiding-place, the man was worried that

A. his shouts would not be heard from the beach.
B. anyone hearing him would not understand properly.
C. he was too far away to be seen from the beach.
D. he would be too exhausted to show anyone where he was.

SECOND PASSAGE

When the British expedition of which I was a member climbed Everest by the difficult route up the South-West Face of the mountain in 1975, we discovered the advantages and disadvantages of several different methods of camp cooking. There seems little doubt that as a general recommendation kerosene* stoves are by far the most reliable and economical heat source when the group is a large one and we used a variety of large domestic stoves up to Camp 2, just below the South-West Face. The main drawback of these stoves, however, apart from weight, is that locally available kerosene invariably has dirt in it. We had arranged before we left to take over 200 gallons of specially filtered kerosene from this country and we used only this above Base Camp where stoves which do not work properly are far harder to deal with. Additional local kerosene had to be used at the Base Camp but then only after filtering, in theory anyway, by the Sherpa cooks.

On the South-West Face itself during the climb, we used gas stoves supplied with butane* gas in throwaway containers, as this is easily the most efficient way of carrying fuel on the mountain. The cleanliness of the fuel together with the fact that it was easy to light and that it produced no poisonous gases when burning, all important in a small tent, made this choice the only possible one. However, these stoves have one serious disadvantage. The butane gas fuel which they use is affected by extreme cold it becomes liquid at $-5^{0}C$, a degree of cold which is quite common on Everest. Propane*, which is usually stored under pressure, is a much better gas to use when it is extremely cold, but unfortunately British regulations do not allow high pressure fuels to be sold in the lightweight throwaway containers we required. Luckily we were able to buy 500 cylinders of a fifty-fifty propane-butane mix from the French team in the Himalayas and we used this with great success on the South-West Face of Everest.

**kerosene, butane and propane are all types of fuel*

32. What fuel did the British team use at Base Camp?

A. imported kerosene
B. local kerosene
C. butane
D. propane

33. In what way was the fuel the British team used between Base Camp and Camp 2 different from that which they had used at Base Camp?

A. I was cleaner.
B. It was lighter.
C. It was filtered by the cooks.
D. It gave out more heat.

34. The British team used gas stoves on the South-West Face of the mountain because

A. the stoves were designed especially for climbers.
B. the gas containers were easy to carry.
C. the stoves were easy to clean.
D. the containers did not take up much room.

35. The only problem with butane gas stoves is that

A. they give off gases which are harmful in a tent.
B. you cannot always get this gas in throwaway containers.
C. they will not work if they get damp.
D. they will not work if the weather is very cold.

36. The British team bought some containers of propane and butane gas from the French team because

A. they could not buy propane gas in Britain.
B. the French containers were lighter than the British ones.
C. the French team had more fuel than they needed.
D. they found that they hadn't brought enough fuel with them.

AMERICA FOR OVERSEAS VISITORS

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Visitors to the USA can take advantage of reduced airfares by booking a VISIT USA (VUSA) air-passes. These passes are available on most routes.

UNLIMITED VUSA AIR PASSES

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USA/Canada	14 days	400
USA	30 days	450
USA/Canada	60 days	510
USA/Mexico	14 days	425
USA/Mexico	30 days	475

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**extra charge payable at local stations*

AMTRAK INTERNATIONAL RAIL PASSES

Validity	*Price $*
7 days	250
14 days	375
21 days	500
30 days	625

Note: Price in pounds will depend on the exchange rate at time of purchase. Tickets must be purchased at least 10 days before departure.

37. You want to travel around the USA for two weeks and visit Mexico. What would you pay for a VUSA air-pass?

A. $350
B. $425
C. $450
D. $475

38. The cheapest way to travel all around the US for two weeks is to buy

A. a Greyhound Bus Ameripass purchased in your own country.
B. a Greyhound Bus Ameripass purchased in the USA.
C. a VUSA Unlimited air pass.
D. an Amtrak USA Rail Pass purchased in your own country.

39. If you decide to travel by rail, an Amtrak Rail Pass

A. offers sleeping accommodation included in the fare.
B. offers a choice of dining rooms on all trains.
C. cannot be bought on the day of departure.
D. must be bought in the USA.

40. Which of the various means of transport will definitely be available whether you have made advance arrangements or not?

A. air
B. bus
C. car
D. train

Appendix 4.2 Reading Comprehension Test 2

In this section you will find after each of the passages a number of questions or unfinished statements about the passage, each with four suggested answers or ways of finishing. You must choose the one which you think fits best. Give one answer only to each question. Read each passage right through before choosing your answers.

FIRST PASSAGE

Francis Wingate had not been to Tockley for many years - she could not remember how many. Her grandfather had died when she was fourteen. Her grandmother had died ten years later, but she had been out of the country at the time and had not gone to the funeral. In fact, after her grandfather's death she had hardly visited Tockley at all, she now remembered guiltily: the place had begun to depress her. She could no longer stand the slow pace, the quietness, the emptiness, the very things that had charmed her as a small child, and her grandmother had turned odd and difficult to live with, even more bad-tempered than she had been when younger, even more given to sudden bursts of anger and long silences.

She thought of it, then as now, as 'going to Tockley', but the house wasn't really in Tockley: it was about six miles out, a distance that had then seemed enormous, as it had to be travelled by bus. The town was a medium-sized ordinary town, with much light industry; it was easy enough to get to, but it was the kind of place one goes through, rather than stops at. Francis had booked a room at the Railway Hotel, because it was next to the station, and because her guide-book said it was well run and that the food was quite good. She looked out of the window of the train and wondered what she remembered of the town. Little, she thought. It hadn't meant much to her grandparents: they went there once a fortnight to shop, depending otherwise on the shop in the nearest village and on what they produced in their own garden. There was a famous church, rising out of the flat plain, which could be seen for miles: her guide-book described it with some excitement, but she didn't remember that she had ever been in it. She remembered the wool shop, the shoe shop, the grocer's a little. It had probably all changed by now.

The cottage, too, had probably changed. She remembered it in great detail. It had been the one fixed point in her childhood; for her parents had always been moving from one house top another as her father had been promoted from one academic post to the next; five years here, three years there, had been the pattern. Granny Ollerenshaw, in the cottage, had been immovable, unchanged and unchanging. They called it Eel Cottage: over the doorway there was a square sign which announced EEL 1779. For years Frances had thought that this meant the fish which lived in muddy ditches; only later, looking more closely;y, did not realise that the mysterious word must have been the builder's or owner's initials. The cottage was a basic cottage, the kind that small children draw: low, a door in the middle, two windows downstairs, two windows upstairs. It was built of red brick, the brick of the district, with a red-tiled steep roof.

26. Why didn't Frances remember very much about Tockley?

A. There was nothing special in the town.
B. She had only been there once or twice.
C. She had been abroad for a long time.
D. The town had changed a great deal since her childhood.

27. Where was Frances' grandparents' house?

A. on the edge of Tockley
B. near the shops in Tockley
C. in a village on a bus route from Tockley
D. in the countryside some miles from Tockley

28. Why was Frances' grandparents' house called "Eel Cottage"?

A. Eels used to be common in the area.
B. Someone's initials had spelt the word 'Eel'.
C. The first owner had been called Mr Eel.
D. No-one knew why.

29. Why did Frances stop visiting the cottage regularly?

A. She had been leading a very busy life.
B. She had quarrelled with her grandmother.
C. She had come to dislike the place.
D. She had lost touch with her family.

30. Why had her grandparents' house meant a lot to Frances as a child?

A. She had been brought up happily there.
B. The shape and colour of the house had attracted her.
C. She had felt things would never change there.
D. She had been lonely as a child.

SECOND PASSAGE

Trees should only be pruned when there is a good and clear reason for doing so and fortunately, the number of such reasons is small. Pruning involves the cutting away of overgrown and unwanted branches, and the inexperienced gardener can be encouraged by the thought that more damage results from doing it unnecessarily than from leaving the tree to grow in its own way.

First, pruning may be done to make sure that trees have a desired shape or size. The object may be to get a tree of the right height, and at the same time to help the growth of small side branches which will thicken its appearance or give it a special shape. Secondly, pruning may be done to make the tree healthier. You may cut out diseased or dead wood, or branches that are rubbing against each other and thus causing wounds. The health of a tree may be encouraged by removing branches that are blocking up the centre and so preventing the free movement of air.

One result of pruning is that an open wound is left on the tree and this provides an easy entry for disease, but it is a wound that will heal. Often there is a race between the healing and the disease as to whether the tree will live or die, so that there is a period when the tree is at risk. It should be the main aim of every gardener to reduce that risk of death as far as possible. It is essential to make the area which has been pruned smooth and clean, for healing will be slowed down by roughness. You should allow the cut surface to dry for a few hours and then paint it with one of the substances available from garden shops produced especially for this purpose. Pruning is usually done in winter, for then you can see the shape of the tree clearly without interference from the leaves and it is, too, very unlikely that the cuts you make will bleed. If this does happen, it is, of course, impossible to paint them properly.

31. Pruning should be done to

A. make the tree grow taller.
B. improve the shape of the tree.
C. get rid of the small branches.
D. make the small branches thicker.

32. Trees become unhealthy if the gardener

A. allows too many branches to grow in the middle.
B. does not protect them from the wind,
C. forces them to grow too quickly.
D. damages some of the small side branches.

33. Why is a special substance painted on the tree?

A. to make a wound smooth
B. to prevent disease entering a wound.
C. to cover a rough surface
D. to help a wound to dry

34. A good gardener prunes a tree

A. at intervals throughout the year.
B. as quickly as possible.
C. occasionally when necessary.
D. regularly every winter.

35. What was the author's purpose when writing this passage?

A. to give practical instructions for pruning a tree
B. to give a general description of pruning
C. to explain how trees develop diseases
D. to discuss different methods of pruning

THIRD PASSAGE

You go to a book stall to choose some books for a long train journey. You pick some up and read what it says about them on the back covers.
Read the following extracts from the book descriptions and then answer the questions.

Book A

... The Roman Emperor Claudius writes the inside story of his public life. Men classed him as a pitiful fool. But the actions he describes are far from foolish. Reluctantly crowned Emperor, he appears as a man whose errors came from good nature and innocence. It is the common people and the common soldiers who help him to repair the damage done by the Emperor Caligula by conquering Britain, and who stand by him in his final hard judgement on his unfaithful wife, Messalina.

This is one of the finest historical reconstructions published this century. ...

Book B

... A fortune-teller once told Mary (as the author calls herself in this book): "You are going to be loved by people you've never seen and never will see".
That statement came true when she published her delightful and exact record of country life at the end of the last century - a record in which she describes the fast-dissolving England of farm-worker and country tradesman and colours her picture with the cheerful courage and the rare pleasures that marked a self-sufficient world of work and poverty. ...

Book C

..."Leave it to my man, Johnson," Cecil used to say, whether the problem was the colour of a shirt, the shape of a hat, the style of a coat. What did it matter if Johnson tended to take charge of his life and that without his approval his employer could not even grow a moustache? Was he not there for him to lean on in moments of difficulty?
And such moments were frequent in the leisured life of Cecil and his friends in the London of the first motor buses.

Book D

... The novel is the story of a man for whom both real life and university research have lost their meaning. Separated from his over-emotional wife, Gerald Middleton is painfully aware that the centre of his life is empty. But the world is reaching out for him again. ...
Gerald is the only person still alive who was present when Bishop Eorpwald's grave was opened and the strange wooden figure found which has offended, puzzled and fascinated students of early English history for years. But he also keeps another even worse secret .... .

36. Which book will probably be light and humorous?

A. Book A
B. Book B
C. Book C
D. Book D

37. Which book seems to be set in the present day?

A. Book A
B. Book B
C. Book C
D. Book D

38. From the information given here, the Emperor Claudius appears to have been

A. a foolish ruler.
B. an ambitious man.
C. a successful general.
D. a forgiving husband.

39. Gerald Middleton appears to be a

A. professor of history.
B. private detective.
C. writer of crime stories.
D. university student.

40. What was the relationship between Johnson and Cecil?

A. Johnson ordered Cecil to do things.
B. Johnson never questioned orders.
C. Cecil depended on Johnson.
D. Cecil paid Johnson well.

Appendix 4.3 Reading Comprehension Test 3

In this section you will find after each of the passages a number of questions or unfinished statements about the passage, each with four suggested answers or ways of finishing. You must choose the one which you think fits best. Give one answer only to each question. Read each passage right through before choosing your answers.

FIRST PASSAGE

By far the most common snake in Britain is the adder. In Scotland, in fact, there are no other snakes at all. The adder is also the only British snake with a poisonous bite. It can be found almost anywhere, but prefers sunny hill-sides and rough open country, including high ground. In Ireland there are no snakes at all.

Most people regard snake bites as a fatal misfortune, but not all bites are serious, and very few are fatal. Sometimes attempts at emergency treatment turn out to be more dangerous than the bite itself, with amateurs heroically, but mistakingly, trying do-it-yourself surgery and other unnecessary measures.

All snakes have small teeth, so it follows that all snakes can bite, but only the bite of the adder presents any danger. British snakes are shy animals and are far more frightened of you than you could possibly be of them. The adder will attack only if it feels threatened, as can happen if you take it by surprise and step on it accidentally, or if you try to catch it or pick it up, which it dislikes intensely. If it hears you coming, it will normally get out of the way as quickly as it can, but adders cannot move very rapidly and my attack before moving if you are very close.

The effect of a bite varies considerably. It depends upon several things, one of which is the body-weight of the person bitten. The bigger the person, the less harmful the bite is likely to be, which is why children suffer far more seriously from snake bites than adults. A healthy person will also have better resistance against the poison.
Very few people actually die from snake bites in Britain, and though these bites can make some people very ill, there are probably just as many cases of bites having little effect or no effect, as there are of serious illness.

26. Adders are most likely to be found

A. in wilder parts of Britain and Ireland.
B. in Scotland and nowhere else.
C. on uncultivated land throughout Britain.

27. If you are with someone who is bitten by an adder you should

A. try to catch the adder.
B. make no attempt to treat the bite.
C. not worry about the victim.
D. operate as soon as possible.

28. We are told adders are

A. normally friendly towards people.
B. unlikely to bite except in self-defence.
C. aggressive towards anyone in their territory.
D. not afraid of human beings.

29. If an adder hears you approaching, it will usually

A. move out of your path.
B. take no notice of you at all.
C. disappear very quickly.
D. wait until you are close then attack.

30. We are told that in general British people think snakes are

A. not very common in Britain.
B. usually harmless.
C. more dangerous than they usually are.
D. unlikely to kill people by their bite.

SECOND PASSAGE

An industrial society, especially one as centralised and concentrated as that of Britain, is heavily dependent on certain essential services, for instance, electricity supply, water, rail and road transport, the harbours. The area of dependency has widened to include removing rubbish, hospital and ambulance services, and, as the economy develops, central computer and information services as well. If any of these services ceases to operate, the whole economic system is in danger.

It is this interdependency of the economic system which makes the power of trade unions such an important issue. Single trade unions have the ability to cut off many countries' economic blood supply. This can happen more easily in Britain than in some other countries, in part because the labour force is highly organised. About 55 per cent of British workers belong to unions, compared to under a quarter in the United States. For historical reasons, Britain's unions have tended to develop along trade and occupational lines, rather than on an industry-by-industry basis, which makes a wages policy, democracy in industry and the improvement of procedures for fixing wage levels difficult to achieve.

There are considerable strains and tensions in the trade union movement, some of them arising from their outdated and inefficient structure. Some unions have lost many members because of industrial changes. Others are involved in arguments about who should represent workers in new trades. Unions for skilled trades are separate from general unions, which means that different levels of wages for certain jobs are often a source of bad feeling between unions. In traditional trades which are being pushed out of existence by advancing technologies, unions can fight for their members' disappearing jobs to the point where the jobs of other unions' members are threatened or destroyed. The printing of newspapers both in the United States and in Britain has frequently been halted by the efforts of printers to hold on to their traditional highly-paid jobs.

Trade unions have problems of internal communication just as managers in companies do, problems which multiply in very large unions or in those which bring workers in very different industries together into a single general union. Some trade union officials have to be re-elected regularly; others are elected, or even appointed, for life. Trade union officials have to work with a system of 'shop stewards' in many unions, 'shop stewards' being workers elected by other workers as their representatives at factory or works level.

31. Why is the question of trade union power important in Britain?

A. The economy is very interdependent.
B. Unions have been established a long time.
C. There are more unions in Britain than elsewhere.
D. There are many essential services.

32. Why is it difficult to improve the procedures for fixing wage levels?

A. Some industries have no unions.
B. Unions are not organised according to industries.
C. Only 55 per cent of workers belong to unions.
D. Some unions are too powerful.

33. Because of their out-of-date organisation some unions find it difficult to

A. change as industries change.
B. get new members to join.
C. learn new technologies.
D. bargain for high enough wages.

34. Disagreements arise between unions because some of them

A. try to win over members of other unions.
B. ignore agreements.
C. protect their own members at the expense of others.
D. take over other union's jobs.

35. In what ways are unions and large companies similar?

A. Both have too many managers.
B. Both have problems in passing on information.
C. Both lose touch with individual workers.
D. Both their managements are too powerful.

36. What basic problem are we told most trade unions face?

A. They are not equal in size or influence.
B. They are not organised efficiently.
C. They are less powerful than employers' organisations.
D. They do not have enough members.

THIRD PASSAGE

BREAKAWAYS

Short break holidays throughout Britain

Win A Super Value
Breakaway Weekend For 2

This is your chance to win a Breakaway weekend for two people at any of the 83 Breakaway hotels throughout Britain.

To win the Breakaway weekend for two, answer these four questions and send your entry, to arrive not later than 31 July 1985, to Team House, 24 Church Street, Ashford, Kent TN25 5BJ.

1. The St Vincent Rocks Hotel, Bristol, is on the edge of the Avon Gorge which is crossed by the Clifton Bridge. Who designed the bridge?

2. The Aerodrome Hotel, Croydon, is next to the airfield from which England's famous solo pilot made her record flights in the 1930s. Who was she?

3. The Talbot Hotel, Oundle, Northants is not far from the village of Fotheringay and the castle where one of history's most famous queens was imprisoned. Who was she?

4. The Larkfield Hotel, Maidstone, is a few miles away from one of England's top motor racing tracks. What is the name of the track?

The person whose correct entry is picked out first by a computer will win the prize. This decision is final. The winner will be sent a super value breakaway booklet giving details of the 83 hotels from which he/she can choose where to spend the prize weekend.

Every Breakaway hotel gives you the chance to see something different, while providing you with comfortable surroundings and good food.

A Breakaway weekend includes a three-course dinner, accommodation and a full English breakfast, for two nights. You also get Sunday lunch, either a traditional meal at your hotel, or, if you are planning to go sightseeing, the hotel will provide a packed lunch for you.

Breakaway hotels are great places for families. Children can choose from their own special menu, and for those up to 12 years old accommodation is free of charge when sharing a room with their parents.

A super value Breakaway booklet will be sent to you if you contact this number:0252 51 7517.

37. This competition will be won by the person

A. who sends in the first correct answers.
B. whose correct entry is selected by a computer.
C. whose entry arrives first on 31 July.
D. whose entry is the final one selected by the computer.

38. Question 4 in the competition is different from the others because

A. the hotel described is a modern one.
B. it asks about a place not a person.
C. the hotel can be easily reached by car.
D. the answer is the name of a man.

39. The winner's weekend will include

A. a free room for children under 12.
B. dinner on two days and one lunch.
C. dinner and packed lunches on two days.
D. light breakfasts in his/her room.

40. The advertisement suggests that the best way to get a Breakaway booklet is to

A. enter the competition.
B. write to one of the hotels.
C. write to Team House.
D. telephone 0252 51 7517.

Appendix 5 Texts selected from first year course books for cloze test (for readability) (the underlined words in the texts were the deleted ones for cloze)

Appendix 5.1 Texts from the geography text book

Text 1

Fill each blank with the most appropriate word and its correct form.

Population is neither a physical element nor yet a cultural element, but instead occupies a unique position which sets it apart from all other phenomena. Population is the point of reference from which the other elements are observed and from which the significance and meaning of other elements is derived.

An earth without population lacks resources, for resources imply human wants, as it is the human resource which enables the utilisation of natural resources, the physical earth changes into the cultural earth by man acting on nature, and resources change as the civilisation of human beings changes.

The human resource shows considerable variations in spatial distribution, demographic characteristics like age and sex structure; social factors and economic activities. The size of a population, first of all, is a very gross measure of its economic relevance. The population number alone is not an adequate measure of the capacity of a population to utilize natural resources, to enjoy the fruits of its labours, and to create a material culture.

Numbers are principally a count of men's bodies the capacity of which do not vary so widely over earth. The variable element in population lies chiefly in people's mental skills and equipment , their social and economic institutions, their degrees of technological advancement - all of which are features of population not revealed by mere count of heads. Thus, the size of population advocates for the checking of fast growing world population because the basic assertion of the concept is that population grows at geometric ratio while the food increase is limited in arithmetic ratio (Malthusian theory).

Text 2

The Oromo and Somali movement is separated from the Hamitic population because of its recent occurrence in the history of the country. The two groups had occupied the south-eastern low-land. Either due to the population increase or due to the attack by the Somali, the Oromos moved to westward and north-western highland. Today, the Oromos are distributed in the larger part of the country including the areas where they are assimilated with the trickling immigrant population known as the Semites from the Arabian peninsula. The Semites started movement, not in mass-form, from 2000 B.C. to the present. As a result, assimilation was probably true instead of political imposition while the Semites advanced towards southwards.

There is a strong relationship between the type of production activity and the density of population. The space requirement for agricultural production is different from that of industrial production.

In Ethiopia, nomadic areas have less population capacity as nomads are greedy of space for pasture. In the Awash River basin, nomads of certain areas need 20 gashas. For one cattle definitely, he requires space measured in hundred gashas.

The population capacity of the land is higher if it is cultivated rather than grazed.
On the plateau itself, the density is influenced by the type of crop cultivated and the technology applied. The traditional agriculture region of the north and central Ethiopia has low yield per unit area, and hence low population capacity due to poor soil and cereal crops. The Inset region and coffee producing areas have high yield per unit area. Hence, the density of population is very high.

Text 3

Broadly understood vegetation comprises of all land plants ranging from shrubs, grasses, to tall trees. Vegetation shows intimate relations with topography, soil, climate, water courses, population settlement, altitude and the like. It is an integral part of the environment, and the physical forms of plants, their assemblage, luxuriance and the like, vary systematically with the geographic elements noted above. Changes in the quality and density of vegetation, mainly through man's interference, result in drastic changes in other physical and biotic phenomena. To distinguish from vegetation that has deteriorated, due to man's action, that is, secondary vegetation, we define the original vegetation cover of a region existing due to normal condition of climate and soil, and without experiencing significant intervention by man as natural vegetation.

Vegetation being an integral part of the environment has a very important role in maintaining the balance in climate and soil. It protects the soil erosion (by wind or water), it maintains the water balance of an area, adds moisture to the atmosphere, serves as habitat for wild animals. Moreover, vegetation is a resource in its own right and can be exploited for a variety of uses. These include the construction of dwelling units, furniture, for the production of energy (as fuel), in the production of paper (as pulp), and as a beauty of nature for recreational purposes.

As a reflection of location, altitude, soil, and climate variations, there are different vegetation types in the world. These can be grouped into four: 1) forests: dense growth of trees with ares usually shaded undergrowth; 2) grasslands: extensive cover of grass, with some trees scattered here and there; and 3) desert shrubs: arid and semi-arid vegetation comprised of tufts and shrubs, small in size and sparse.

(from Department of Geography, AAU. **Introduction to Geography of Ethiopia: Summarized Readings in Geography 101**

Appendix 5.2 Texts from the history text book

Text 1

Of these pre-Aksumite states the more prosperous ones, and therefore the ones which left behind them more archaeological sites and relics, were located in northern Ethiopia. The reason for this is not the traditional explanation which says that northern Ethiopia was first colonized and settled by South Arabians or other Semitic peoples. Rather, the reason lies in the nearness of the sea to the plateau where the ivory, the slaves and the animals for export were available. The highlands of northern Ethiopia were separated from the Red Sea by a narrow strip of lowland which in those days, more than in present times, was crossed with little hardship and discomfort to merchants, porters or pack animals. The highlands of southern and central Ethiopia on the other hand were separated from the sea by vast hot and inhospitable lowlands. In other words, northern Ethiopia presented less hardship to merchants than central and southern Ethiopia and foreign merchants in particular preferred to deal with people in the former zone. It is even quite possible that commodities which originated in central and southern Ethiopia may have been moved for export and shipping.

Another tradition which, in the light of recent archaeological findings and linguistic analyses, must be corrected is the one that emphasized the Semitic, Sabean to be specific, origins of Aksumite culture and civilization. Aksum was not a state created by Sabean settlers, and Aksumite culture was not derived from that which the Sabeans had developed in South Arabia.

Text 2

Thus already before the coming of the British who are traditionally described as being responsible for the downfall of Tewodros, the emperor had virtually lost control of the kingdom and with it abandoned all the aspirations and plans of 1855. In fact one has to ask what the role of the British was in the downfall of Tewodros and whether the tendency to attribute his downfall totally to their military action is justified.

It is already mentioned that throughout his reign Tewodros had been very much alive to Egyptian threat of expansion and that this suspicion was one of the instant factors in his plan for a united country and strong government. The opposition from within made it impossible for him to count on internal resources to bring about these desired changes. Therefore, he turned his eyes to the Christian European powers whom he understood to be his potential allies in his struggle against his Moslem enemies.

About the end of 1852 the emperor was alerted by a fresh Egyptian raid across his frontiers. That year being a year of relative internal stability, he decided to make a diplomatic move with letters to his European colleagues. He sent almost similar letters to both the sovereigns of Great Britain and France in which he expressed his desire to establish closer ties with them by means of embassies which he intended to send to their respective courts. He hinted that as Christians, he might count on their assistance to repulse the aggressive moves of the common enemy.

Text 3

Such then was the situation when Mussolini made the biggest gamble of his life by declaring war on the Allied Powers on the side of Nazi Germany. Thus, at one stroke, he brought to an end the decades of Anglo-Italian collusion over Ethiopia. His ally and collaborator became his mortal enemy. What so far had been ignored as an African episode of remote concern to the Allied Powers suddenly assumed international magnitude. For the patriots, who, in spite of their dedicated and heroic struggle for liberty and honour, had been deprived of concrete and substantial international support, the internationalisation of the conflict was the long awaited opportunity.

In terms of the political stature of Haile Selassie as well, this broadening of the conflict was of crucial importance. From a pathetic exile, he turned into an important instrument of British imperial strategy. He was a convenient symbol of indigenous authority to replace the Italians. With Haile Selassie as a front figure, the British made a three pronged attack on the Italians. In the north, General Platt led the attack on Eritrea, the high point of which was the liberation of Keren. From the west, a British force led by Major (later Colonel) Sandford and Major (later General) Wingate liberated Gojjam and headed for the capital, Addis Ababa. But it was the southern British force led by General Cunningham which, in conjunction with Ethiopian patriots, had the honour of liberating the capital on April 6, 1941.

With that opened a new chapter of Ethiopian history. The pre-war situation of tripartite competition for influence in Ethiopia gave way to unilateral British domination.

(Department of History, 1983 **Introduction to History of Ethiopia** (mimeo)

Appendix 5.3 Texts from the philosophy text book

Text 1

A philosophical world outlook is a system of highly generalised theoretical views of the world, of nature, society and man. Philosophy seeks to work out, to substantiate the basic principles of a definite orientation in the social, political, scientific, moral, and aesthetic spheres of life.

Everybody forms his own particular view of the surrounding world, but this view often consists of no more than fragments of various contradictory ideas without any theoretical basis. Philosophy, on the other hand, is not merely the sum total but a *system* of ideas, opinions and conceptions of nature, society, man and his place in the world. It does not merely proclaim its principles and try to make people believe in them; it gives logical arguments for these principles.

By no means every theoretically substantiated world outlook is scientific in character. Its actual content may be scientific or unscientific or even anti-scientific. Only the world outlook that bases its conclusions on the findings of contemporary science, that uses scientific method in its thinking and leaves no room for various kinds of anti-scientific, mystical and religious views and superstitions may be considered scientific. Of course, the evolution of a scientific world outlook must be considered historically. For example, the world outlook of the French materialists of the 18th century was scientific in its view of nature, which besides a historically transient element contained something that proved to be historically intransigent and was inherited by modern materialism.

Text 2

It stands to reason that there are a number of common consequences of the scientific and technological revolution that affect both capitalism and socialism, such as the greater role of science in society, the increase of expenditure on scientific research, the greater significance of engineering, scientific and technological work, the emergence of new professions, and so on. It would also be a mistake to assume that in socialist society the development of the scientific and technological revolution does not give rise to any contradictions and precedes without a hitch. But the advantage of socialism lies in its ability to solve the problems set by this revolution on a planned basis, because it corresponds to the needs and aims of the development of the socialist social relations. The further socialisation of production evoked by the STR creates a material basis from which there grows the objective possibility and necessity of socialist relations of production developing into communist production relations.

To sum up, each form of production relations exists for as long as it provides sufficient scope for the development of the productive forces. But gradually the relations of production come into contradiction with the developing productive forces and become a brake on them. They are then superseded by new relations of production, the role of which is to serve as the form of the further development of the productive forces. Marx observes that people never give up the productive forces they have brought into being, but this does not mean that they do not give up the production relations that have till then served as the form of development of these forces.

Text 3

The fundamental direction of social development, for example the transition from feudalism to capitalism or the replacement of capitalist by socialist society, is determined by objective laws that do not depend on the will and consciousness of people, even the most outstanding. When considering the general causes of historical development, we may temporarily put the role of the individual into the abstract. The same may be said of the effects of particular causes and circumstances (for example, the influence on the historical process in this or that country of the level of its development and the particular features of the situation), which do not depend on separate individuals either. But what we should not do is to ignore the role of the individual in explaining specific historic events, which depend not only on general and particular but also on individual causes. Thus, the course of revolution in a particular country, and also the course and outcome of wars between states and other concrete historical events depend not only on the main, determining causes, but also on such factors as the wisdom and foresight or, conversely, incompetence and shortsightedness of the leaders who presided over these events. Unless we take into account these factors, these historical accidents of every kind, the living, concrete history acquires a fatalistic and mystical character.

The Marxist position on the question of the role of the individual in history was set forth in the clearest of formulas by Lenin: "Marxism differs from all other socialist theories in the remarkable was it combines complete scientific sobriety in the analysis of the objective state of affairs and the objective course of evolution with the most emphatic recognition of the importance of the revolutionary energy, revolutionary creative genius and revolutionary initiative of the masses.

(**The Fundamentals of Marxist Leninist Philosophy**. Moscow:Progress Publishers,1982.)

Appendix 5.4 Texts from the political economy text book

Text 1

In the struggle against feudalism, the classical bourgeois economists to a certain extent truthfully depicted the relations of the capitalist system, but they did not understand capitalism's limitations, considered it eternal and natural, and skated around the class antagonism between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. But from the moment the working class entered the arena of its own class struggle against capitalism, the ideologists of the bourgeoisie began conspicuously to avoid scientific analysis of the realities of capitalism. The creation of a whole series of pseudo-scientific theories to confirm the eternal nature of capitalism, extol it in every way and abuse socialism, rather than objective research, was the task bourgeois political economy set itself. As Marx said, the death knell of scientific bourgeois political economy had sounded.

Bourgeois economists can gather much valuable factual material in the world today, can propose practical prescriptions enabling the bourgeoisie to increase its profits, can improve the organisation of production and management of a particular capitalist firm, and can advise imperialist states. Their prescriptions, if one discards their exploitative aspects, can to some extent prove useful to the working class when it becomes the owner of the means of production. But all their theoretical generalisations have nothing in common with genuine science, since they do not start from the objective course of the development of society, but are dictated solely by the desire to preserve capitalism, come what may.

Text 2

The basic laws of the development of capitalism are common for industry and agriculture, but that does not exclude that they have certain specific features in agriculture. The most important of these features are the lagging of the development of agriculture behind that of industry, deepening of the antithesis between town and country, and the increasing exploitation of the village by the capitalist town.

Since the Second World War, there has been a radical organisational and technical reconstruction in agriculture in the economically developed capitalist countries, which has consisted basically in a steep increase in the infiltration of monopoly capital into agriculture, the winning of absolutely dominating positions in agriculture by large scale mechanised farming, exceptionally rapid mechanisation and electrification of production processes and the application of chemicals. Even so, agriculture still lags behind industry not only in the capitalist world as a whole, but also in the developed countries. This finds concrete expression mainly in the *much lower degree of concentration in agricultural production than in industry*. Even the capitalist agricultural undertakings on the USA and Great Britain, based on wage labour, are several times smaller than the average industrial enterprises, both in terms of the numbers of workers employed and the volume of output. In most developing countries following the capitalist road, small peasant farms or farms of the kulak type, using hired labour only for seasonal field work, still predominate.

In spite of the technical revolution in agriculture in the developed capitalist countries, farming on the whole still lags behind industry in terms of the *organic composition of capital*, too.

Text 3

Bourgeois economists do their level best to prove that capitalists have been deprived today of the right to control the economy, the functions of control having allegedly been transferred to the hands of hired managers, who are depicted as "people's proxy". In 1940, the American sociologist, James Burnham, published *The Managerial Revolution*, in which he wrote about a period of social transition to a type of society which will be called the managerial society. He talked of economic behaviour of managers.

Bourgeois economists make wide use of the fact that capital as a function is distinct from capital as property, which Karl Marx had already noted. Under imperialism, with the joint stock company or corporation as the main from of enterprise, the distinction between capital as property and its use has reached enormous dimensions.

In making use of this real phenomenon, bourgeois economists misrepresent its essence, proclaiming an expansion of the circle of owners when capital is in fact becoming more centralised. The apologists of imperialism depict functioning capitalists as "people's proxy".

In depicting joint-stock companies as belonging to the whole people, bourgeois ideologists substitute the question of the form of management for that of the form of ownership, thus ignoring the obvious fact that the *character of an enterprise is determined by the form of ownership, not by the form of management.*

Bourgeois economists confuse the issue of which class managers belong to. In fact, there is no specific class of managers. If one has the lower echelons of management in mind, i.e., those involved directly in the process of material production, these people belong to the intelligentsia and receive salaries. They do not make the company's policy decisions or participate in the distribution of profits, and so on.

(G.A. Kozlov, ed. 1977. **Political Economy: Capitalism.** Moscow: Progress Publishers)

Appendix 6 Freshman English Test papers

Appendix 6.1 Freshman English 101A Test papers

Appendix 6.11 Test paper 1

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF LANGUAGE STUDIES

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE Time 2hrs45min.
55 marks

FRESHMAN ENGLISH (101A)

Student's name _____ I.D no.___
Instructor's name _____ Faculty ___
Department _____ Section ___

PART I: READING COMPREHENSION (15 marks)

Read the following two passages and answer the questions that follow according to the information in each passage.

Passage 1

The following passage was given out to passengers as they got on board a bus in Boston, a town in the United States.

— _____

Go ahead. Read this. You don't have to watch the road the way you do when you drive the car.

CONGRATULATIONS!

By riding public transportation, you are helping to solve some of the major pollution problems plaguing Boston.

1. AIR POLLUTION. Motor vehicles powered by internal combustion engines are responsible for over 80 per cent of the deadly carbon monoxide as well as the cancer-causing benzpyrene and nitrates in the air. Eighty nine per cent of the vehicles on the road in Massachusetts are privately owned and are often operated with only one person in the car. If people would use public transportation instead of their cars, air pollution levels could be significantly lowered.

2. SPACE POLLUTION. Thirty per cent of the land in downtown Boston is devoted to cars. Where there are garages, there could be gardens. Where there are highways, there

should be homes and places to work and play.

3. NOISE POLLUTION. Studies show that people today show a greater hearing loss with age than ever before. Much of this is due to honking horns, loud engines and general traffic noise.

A. Select the best answer from those given and write the letter of your choice in the space provided. (1/2 mark each)

1. What is the aim of this passage?
   a. To persuade the reader to buy a car rather than using a bus.
   b. To encourage the reader to continue to travel by bus instead of by car.
   c. To encourage buses to reduce the pollution they cause.
   d. To congratulate the reader on solving the problems of pollution.

2. Which statement is true? Public transport
   a. can solve all the problems of pollution.
   b. can help to solve the problems of pollution.
   c. is plaguing the city of Boston.
   d. is responsible for 80% of the carbon monoxide.

3. 89% of the vehicles on the road in Massachusetts are
   a. responsible for 80% of carbon monoxide poisoning.
   b. driven with only one person in them.
   c. replaced by public transport.
   d. owned by private individuals.

4. If people used public transport instead of their own cars, there would be less air pollution because there would be
   a. less people travelling in cars of their own.
   b. less vehicle son the roads.
   c. more buses on the roads.
   d. less space pollution.

5. Space pollution means
   a. land devoted to homes, gardens, pleasant living and play areas.
   b. land that becomes polluted with chemicals, carbon monoxide etc.
   c. Air that is polluted over the land.
   d. land occupied by cars and car factories, garages, roads, etc.

6. 30 per cent of the land in Boston
   a. has cars parked on them.
   b. is used for activities related to cars, eg. roads and garages.
   c. is devoted to gardens, homes and places to work, live and play; the rest is devoted to the car.
   d. could be turned into gardens, homes and places to work and play if everyone used public transport.

7. Noise pollution means
   a. any excessive level of noise which may damage peoples' health.
   b. as people get older, so they get deafer.
   c. the sound of horns in Boston.
   d. loud engines responsible for polluting the air.

8. Loud noises
   a. will quickly make people go deaf.
   b. may lead to people getting deafer earlier.
   c. need to be studied so that we can find out their effects.
   d. are inevitable in a big city like Boston.

B. Answer the following questions according to the information in Passage 1. (1 mark each)

9. In one sentence explain why people should use public transport instead of their cars is they are travelling alone.

_____
_____
_____

10. A bus may cause more pollution than a car. Why then is it still better for a person to use a bus rather than a car?

_____
_____
_____

11. What advantage to travelling by bus is the first line trying to emphasise by stating, 'you don't have to watch the road...'?

_____
_____
_____

12. Name any one further advantage that an increase in public transport has not mentioned in the passage.

_____
_____
_____

Passage 2

The Polar Regions

The northern and southern polar regions are different in many ways. The most important difference concerns the distribution of land and water. The northern Arctic regions are ice-covered sea, almost completely surrounded by land. the pole itself is in deep water. In the south, Antarctica is a huge continent which is surrounded by a great ocean. Because of this basic difference other differences occur. The Arctic has a varied climate, while the Antarctic climate varies little; the Arctic has much plant life but the Antarctic is an empty desert. And whereas the Arctic has been exploited economically for centuries, trade has never really touched Antarctica.

Interest in the Arctic began when America was discovered, and explorers tried to find a western sea route to India and China. In their search to find the 'North-West Passage', the main problem facing the explorers was how to avoid the ice. One explorer, Nansen, found a unique answer to this problem. He deliberately became stuck in the ice, and travelled with it across the Arctic Ocean! But although many explorers tried, it was not until 1903 that the Arctic polar region was crossed by sea. Antarctic exploration begins with Ptolemy. He believed that all the oceans were surrounded by land, and that therefore there was a huge continent somewhere in the south. His idea led to centuries of search, again trade played its part. The real discoverers of Antarctica were the hunters who travelled far south to catch seals.

One reason for the present interest in both polar regions is that the world may soon be short of fresh water. The world's population is doubling every 35 years, and in the United States alone an average person uses - taking everything into account - 1,500 gallons of fresh water a day. The ice in the northern and southern polar regions is actually frozen fresh water. In fact over 85% of the earth's entire fresh water is found in the polar ice. If we could find a way of carrying this ice to other parts of the world, this would solve all our fresh water problems.

C. Fill in the following chart by putting a tick (/) in the appropriate column to show for which polar region each statement is true. The first has been done for you as an example.
(Note: If you put two ticks against the same number you will lose the mark for that question.) (1/2 mark for each correct tick)

	Arctic	Antarctic
Sea surrounded by ice	/	
13. A frozen sea		
14. Land covered in ice		
15. North Pole		
16. South Pole		
17. Plant life exists		
18. Trading possible		
19. Climate never changes much		
20. Only successfully explored this century		

D. Answer the following questions according to the information in Passage 2. (1 mark each)

21. Explain why the discovery of America made people want to explore the Arctic.

_____

22. Ptolemy believed that all oceans were surrounded by land. How far is this true for the Arctic and the Antarctic?

_____

23. Why has the rapid increase in population led to an increased interest in both polar regions?

_____

PART II: VOCABULARY (10 marks)

A. In Column A are a number of words from Passage 1. Match each word with the word or phrase in Column B which has <u>almost the same meaning to that in the passage</u>. Put the letter of your choice in the space on the right.

Column A	Column B	
24. blaguing	a. sounding a car horn	24.
25. significantly	b. disliking	25.
26. devoted to	c. as a result of	26.
27. due to	d. noticeably	27.
28. honking	e. occupied by	28.
	f. severely damaging	
	g. full of locusts	

B. In Column A are a number of words from Passage 2. Match each word with the word or phrase in Column B which has almost the opposite meaning to that in the passage. Put the letter of your choice in the space on the right. (1/2 mark each)

Column A	Column B	
29. unique	a. not used for trade or profit	29.
30. varied	b. salt	30.
31. basic	c. single	31.
32. exploited	d. similar	32.
33. fresh	e. trivial	33.
	f. central	
	g. one of many	

C. Read the passage below and decide where the words given in the list best fit. Write your answers in the spaces provided. (1/2 mark each)

enormous	crucial	futile	slope
menace	crouching	crawl	condone
dent	compelled	deliberately	clinging

The teacher was taking his students on an outing, a long walk up the mountains. In fact, this field trip was 34. ... for their Geography. But not all the students understood the importance of this trip, and one boy, Telila, always naughty in school, was a particular 35. .... on this trip. As we reached the top of this hill, Telila 36....stuck out his foot and tripped up the teacher. The teacher fell straight into a/an 37. ... hole. We all rushed forward and 38. ... by the edge of the hole looked down. There he was, poor teacher, 39. ... onto some roots half way down. It was lucky he didn't fall to the bottom. Anyway he slowly began to 40. ... up the steep 41. ... When he got to the top, he was very angry with Telila and he said he could not 42. ... such wicked behaviour. He punished him when we returned. But such punishments are 43. ... with Telila. He will continue his naughty behaviour whatever teachers say.

PART III: STRUCTURE AND USAGE (20 marks)

A. Choose the correct verb form from the alternatives given in brackets. Write your answers in the spaces provided. (1/2 mark each)

I (44. have always wanted, always want, will always want) to be a musician. When (45. had been, have been, was) a kid, I read the life history of Beethoven and set my heart on studying music. I (46. was living, have been living, had been living) in the countryside and I had no formal music education. But I was delighted in playing the Kerar for my friends and my family. However, my parents were against my becoming a professional musician. My father used to say to me, "How much do you think you (47. shall earn, will have earned, will earn) as a musician, son? Don't dream. Be practical. I (48. will be warning you, am warning you, was warning you)! you (49. will have been spending, will be spending, are spending) the rest of your life in poverty." He urged me to go to university and study business or science. But I (50. already made up, had already made up, have already made up) my mind. After finishing grade 12, I was accepted at Yared Music School in Addis and became a violin major.

I (51. have been s udying, was studying, had been studying) in the School for almost a year when my father and mother came to visit me and again tried to persuade me to stop studying music and join university. I still (52. will remember, remember, remembered) that day. My mother said to me, "Son, please, listen to me. You have passed the ESLCE with good grades. You are still young. Join the university now. Don't miss your chance. Music must be your hobby not your life!" How could I explain to her that music was in fact my life! My mother could not understand me and she would never have understood me, if I (53. had not shown, did not show, have not shown) her how determined I was. I told both my parents that music (54. had always been, has always been, will have always been) and would always be my life.

I (55. have been living, had been living, was living) as a happy musician for over 10 years now. After I graduated from Yared Music School, I (56. have worked, worked, had worked) as a violinist for 2 years and won a scholarship to Julliard Music School in New York, USA. I (57. have not become, had not become, will not have become) like Beethoven, but I am a musician. By the time I am 70, I will have lived the life of the musician that I had dreamed of becoming since I was a child. What more could a person want than to see his dreams come true?

B. Read the following text, and then change the numbered direct speech sentences into reported speech. Write your answers in the spaces provided. (1 mark each)

Amrote, who is 8 years old, came up to me one day and said, (58.) "I have a cat that can speak Amharic." I didn't believe her, of course, but I wanted to find out what she was talking about. So I said to her, (59.) "Show it to me." She took my hand and

dragged me to her bedroom where her cat was. Then she held the cat and said, (60.) "Wurro, are you hungry?" Sure enough, the cat went, "Ah-wo!" and left me shaking with laughter.

58._____
59._____
60._____

C. Choose the most appropriate words or phrases from the list below to fill the blanks. Use one word or phrase only once. Write your answers in the spaces provided. (1/2 mark each)

in	an	to	on	for	everyone
the	any	up	a	little	everything
a lot	a few	at	much	a little	

Last week I went to (61.)--- exhibition (62.) --- an art gallery in the city. I'm not really (63.)--- great art lover but I'd read some good reviews of the exhibition in the newspapers which made me very keen to see it. I arrived (64.)--- minutes before it was due to open but there were already plenty of people waiting outside for the doors to open. Most of the people waiting were youngish, and in fact there didn't seem to be (65.)--- middle-aged people there at all. All of them were waiting patiently and I joined them in the queue. (66)--- the end we were allowed in to see the paintings. Now, I must be honest and admit that all of them were disappointing to me. Although I'd bought a catalogue and spent (67.) ---of the time looking carefully at each picture, I could understand (68.)---of what the artist was getting at. Finally, as I was looking rather stupidly at one of the paintings and trying to decide if it was the right way up or not, an old gentleman came (69.)--- behind me and and started to explain (70.)---whole thing to me. He kindly answered all of my questions and we talked (71.)---over an hour. After that, I went round the gallery once more and I found that I now understood (72)--- much better and some of the paintings seemed really beautiful. It was only as I was leaving the gallery that I found out who the man was I had been talking (73.)---: his self-portrait was (74)--- one of the posters advertising the exhibition.

D. Choose the most appropriate modal verbs from the alternatives given in the brackets. Write your answers in the spaces provided. (1/2 mark each)

a. The Economics instructor didn't let Kebede into class because he was two minutes late. The instructor (75. can't be, must be couldn't be) very strict about time.

b. You (76. mustn't, needn't, ought to) park your car in front of the party office. If you park it there, you will be fined heavily.

c. The old building near our house collapsed yesterday. It (77. must, can, should) have been repaired more than a year ago.

d. My friend rang to tell me that the semester would start on Monday. She 78. mustn't, should, needn't) have done so since I had already known about it.

e. Solomon, the team's best goal scorer, is not playing well today. He (79. can't, mustn't, shouldn't) be all right.

f. Ato Alemu was very angry with his daughter because last Saturday, she came home at 11:30 p.m. She (80. needn't, oughtn't to, can't) have stayed out so late.

PART IV: COMPOSITION (10 marks)

A. Put the following fragments in correct order to make meaningful sentences. Begin with the underlined words and DO NOT add or leave out any words. Write your answers in the spaces provided. (1 mark each)

81. at his country home/the extremely wealthy race-horse owner/Ato Kebede Beshah,/and chairman of the Caribbean carpet industry/has been found dead.//

82. Following up Woizero Genet's phone call /of the 55 year-old rich man/that her husband had gone missing/ after a routine search last night/ in the garage of her house/ the police found the burned remains//

83. The police are certain that/since the way in which Ato Kebede died/ whoever is responsible for the murder/could well provide a clue to the killer's identity/ burned the body,//

84. The gardener at the house/since the day of the murder which was his day off,/to help in the inquiries regarding the murder/and is at the present being sought/has not at all been seen anywhere//

85. The gardener is believed to be/a man fitting this description/and the police have appealed to/wearing a black hat and blue jeans,/to contact them/anyone who has seen//

81._____
82._____
83._____
84._____
85._____

B. Write a paragraph of about 60 words using the notes below. (5 marks)

Notes:
Name: Wogayehu Nigatu
Place and date of birth: Kebena, Addis Ababa, May 1943
Education: Swedish Evangelical Mission (elementary), Teferi Mekonnen (high school), and Madach Theatre Institute, Hungary
Profession: Stage actor
Hobby: Music
Place and date of death: Addis Ababa, November 1989

THE END

Appendix 6.12 Test paper 2

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF LANGUAGE STUDIES

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE Time: 2hrs45min
55 marks

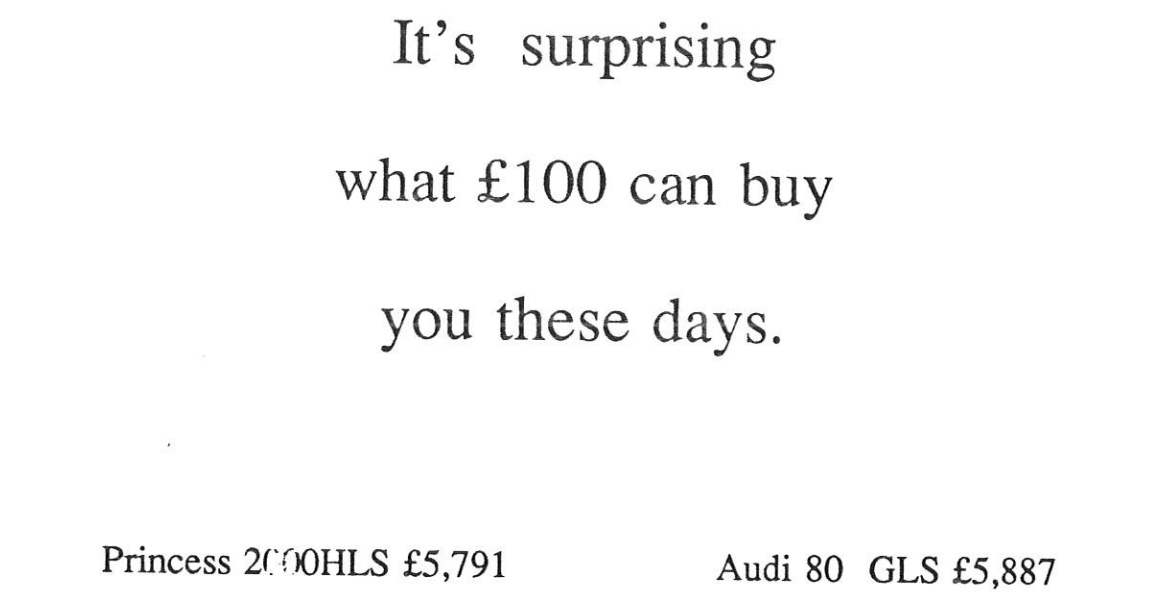
FRESHMAN ENGLISH (101A)

Student's name _____ I.D. No.____
Instructor's name _____ Faculty ____
Department _____ Section ____

PART I: READING COMPREHENSION (15 marks)

Read the following passages and answer the questions that follow according to the information in the passages.

Passage One



Just the other day, we at Audi chanced upon an advertisement for the BL Princess. Naturally, most of the advertisement was devoted to championing the Princess's many virtues.

Towards the end, however, the makers of the Princess issued a very interesting challenge. They said,"...we challenge you to find another car in its class which now approaches it for reliability, comfort, performance or economy." Well, with a price difference of only £96, the Audi 80GLS is certainly in the same class. But just how well does it match up?

Not being people to shirk a challenge, we'll take those points one by one.

RELIABILITY
Reliability is very difficult to assess, of course. However, a recent independent consumer study showed that the Audi 80 GLS was above average for reliability, while the Princess was rated below average.

COMFORT
The princess has built itself an excellent reputation as a large, comfortable saloon. Surprisingly, though, the Audi 80 actually has 1" more elbow room on average, and 11/2" more headroom. (The Princess, to be fair, does have 1/2" more legroom in the rear.)

PERFORMANCE
According to Autocar, the Audi 80 GLS is 21/2 seconds faster from 0-60 mph, over one second faster from 50-70 mph in third gear, and goes on to a higher top speed.

ECONOMY
Again according to Autocar, the Audi GLS achieves 28.2 mpg overall on 2-star petrol compared with the Princess's 24.1 mpg overall on 4-star petrol. At current prices, that could amount to a saving of about £240 over 30,000 miles.

THE AUDI CHALLENGE
Our challenge is quite straight forward: drive both. Put the 80 GLS through its paces. Do the same with the Princess 2000 HLS. You'll be surprised how much difference £100 can make.

(From an advertisement for Audi)
reliability = a person or thing that is reliable or can be trusted
1" = one inch
assess = judge
mph = miles per hour
mpg = miles per gallon

A. Complete the following table about the two cars by putting a tick mark (/) for the car that does <u>better</u> in each category. The first one is done for you as an example.

	Audi 80 GLS	BL Princess
Reliability	/	
(comfort)		
1.elbow room		
2.headroom		
3.legroom(rear)		
(Speed)		
4.0-60 mph		
5.50-70 mph (in third gear)		
(Economy)		
6.mpg		
7.money saved over 30,000 miles		
8.cheaper price		

B. Answer the following questions from Passage One in one or two sentences. No mark will be given for sentences or phrases taken from the passage which contain irrelevant information. (1 mark each)

9. What is the purpose of the advertisement?

_____

10. What sort of magazine do you think "Autocar" is ?

_____

11. What do the advertisers tell the reader to do before buying each car?

_____

12. Look at the title. What do the advertisers claim you can buy for £100?

_____

Passage Two

Africa currently gathers the most international assistance per person among all the continents, though money alone has not solved Africa's problems and, in many instances, may actually have made things worse. At the beginning of this decade, donations from foreign countries average about $20 per person in Africa as compared to $7 per person in Latin America and $ per person in Asia. By 1986, 15 African countries depended on donations for more than 90 per cent of their foreign revenues. But lately, donations not only have failed to keep pace with Africa's growing population but also have actually dropped. Aid for agriculture has suffered the most, dropping 10 per cent between 1980 and 1984. Foreign funds have traditionally gone to raise cash crops on irrigated land rather than improving dry land farming, growing food for domestic use, and conserving soil and water resources.

Nowhere else in the world has aid money bought less progress. A few years back the World Bank reviewed the results of more than 1,000 projects it had funded around the globe. Those in Africa most often fell short of their goals. Agricultural projects, especially livestock operations, fared the worst among all types of African projects. Only five per cent of all Asian agricultural projects were deemed failures at completion, compared to 33 per cent in West Africa and a staggering 50 per cent failure rate in East Africa. Even these evaluations may be overly optimistic.

Fortunately, Africa's successes have indicated how donors can set more realistic expectations based on the actual needs and desires of the recipients. Recently, funding agencies have discovered that by disbursing monies through private institutions or grassroot organisations, they can ensure local involvement in (and support for) development projects.

In an encouraging instance of consensus, both governments and international agencies agree that agriculture must be the underpinning of Africa's rise from despair for without a grip on day-to-day survival, Africans cannot begin to plan for a self-reliant future. Also emerging is a new understanding that this agricultural expansion cannot take place unless Africa's fragile natural resources are managed wisely.

Taken from Topic issue no. 184

C. Choose the most appropriate completion according to the information in Passage Two. Write the letter of your choice in the space provided. (1/2 mark each)

13. The flow of foreign aid to Africa
    a. has drastically increased in recent years.
    b. will increase in the near future.
    c. is equivalent to the increase of population.
    d. could cover most of external revenues of some countries.
14. What is the disadvantage of laying more emphasis on improving cash crops?
    a. It requires more funding.
    b. There will be a lot of crops for export.
    c. It discourages the production of crops for domestic consumption.
    d. Huge irrigational schemes will be entailed.

15. Most of the projects funded by the World Bank were
    a. not successful, particularly in Africa.
    b. relatively not expensive.
    c. based on sound agricultural theories.
    d. established in Asia.

16. Donor nations can best observe local participation in the projects they fund if
    a. they give their funds to private organisations.
    b. they guarantee full-scale cooperation of the host government.
    c. projects are based on the best available agricultural theories.
    d. they guarantee a continued flow of their fund.

17. The lesson learned from the experience in Africa is that
    a. foreign aid should go through the host government.
    b. small organisations can best utilise aid given.
    c. local participation is not very much important.
    d. livestock operations must be given the priority when allocating funds.

18. African countries can plan for a self-reliant economic system if they
    a. can focus on satisfying the need for food for domestic consumption.
    b. exploit their natural resources.
    c. establish only one government for the whole continent.
    d. rise from despair.

D. Answer the following questions from Passage Two in one or two sentences. No marks will be given for sentences or phrases taken from the passage which contain irrelevant information. (1 mark each)

19. What sort of projects were most often financed by foreign aid in Africa?

20. How can a donor country ensure that its fund is used what it is meant for?

21. Why is agriculture taken as the most important economic sector for Africa's rise from underdevelopment?

22 How can agricultural progress in Africa be guaranteed?

PART II: VOCABULARY (10 marks)

A. In Column A are a number of words from Passage Two. Match each word with the word or phrase in Column B which has almost the same meaning as in the passage. Put the letter of your choice in the space provided. (1/2 mark each)

Column A	Column B	
23. assistance	a.judged	23.
24. revenue	b.lose of hope	24.
25. deemed	c.expecting the best	25.
26. optimistic	d.charged	26.
27. despair	e.help	27.
	f.income	
	g.pessimistic	

B. In Column A are a number of words from Passage Two. Match each word with the word or phrase in Column B which has almost the opposite meaning as in the passage. Put the letter of your choice in the space provided. (1/2 mark each)

Column A	Column B	
28. currently	a. foreign	28.
29. failed	b. in the past	29.
30. domestic	c. dependent	30.
31. staggering	d. not surprising	31.
32. self reliant	e. local f. succeeded g. shrinking	32.

C. Read the passage below and decide where the words given in the list best fit. Write your answers in the spaces provided. (1/2 mark each)

particles give out horizon receding put up with
harshness came across gave up persisted came out with
give up insisted gave out crest preceding

It was a long walk to the top of Mt Batu. We were surprised by the 33... of the weather with fierce wind and rain, and when we reached the 34.... of the hill even a few 35... of snow fell. We were tired and some people wanted to 36... the walk and return home. However, we agreed to 37... the wind, rain and snow and 38... until we reached the top. There we had lunch. The leader of the group 39... the sandwiches, two each. The view was wonderful and we could see the distant town of Goba on the 40... On our return we 41... several Semien foxes and a variety of birds. We looked back at the mountain as we reached home and could see it 42.... into the mist. It had been worthwhile, but exhausting trip.

PART III: STRUCTURE AND USAGE (20 MARKS)

A. Choose the correct verb from the alternatives given in brackets. Write your answer in the space provided. (1/2 mark each)

It was towards the end of the Middle Ages that leprosy (43. became, has become, becomes) less common in Europe and later on it almost (44.dis-appears, disappeared, has been disappearing) completely. It (45. is, will be, was) possible to close the last French leper home as long ago as 1695. However, the disease is still prevalent in many parts of the world.

One problem with leprosy is that it usually (46. took, had taken, takes) about two and a half to three years before one knows that one (47. will catch, has caught, will have caught) it, and by then most people (48. have, will have, have had) no idea when and how they (49. caught, will catch, are catching) the disease. The first sign is usually a small area of skin irritation; and often there is also a white patch on the skin. In many cases parts of the skin then (50. had lost, lost, lose) the sense of feeling, and pricks with a

needle are not felt. In Europe, where not many doctors (51.have ever seen,will ever see,will have ever seen)leprosy, patients are sometimes given the wrong treatment for years and all kinds of illness are suspected.

Today, governments(52. will be trying, were trying, are trying) to get rid of this terrible disease, and World Health Organisation (53. will be helping, is helping,helped) many of them to this end. It is difficult indeed to treat all the millions of people who (54. suffer,suffered,had been suffering) from the disease and it (55. had probably been,will probably be,has probably been) a long time before it no longer (56.exists,will exist,will have existed

B. Read the following text, and then change the numbered direct speech sentences into reported speech. Write your answers in the spaces provided.

Samuel and Betru were drinking together. 57. Samuel called the waiter and said, "Bring us two beers, please." Then Samuel mentioned that he had decided to quit flying and start a new career. "I have had enough of the flying," said Samuel. 58."What sort of career are you planning to take up?" Betru asked. "I'll probably go into import-export," he replied. He thought for a while and added, 59. "I think it is safer and better paid."

57._____
58._____
59._____

C. Choose the most appropriate words or phrases from the list below to fill the blanks. Use one word or phrase only once. Write your answers in the spaces provided.

with	in	a little	the	a few	nothing
no	at	anyone	an	off	no one
of	to	for	up	on	a

July 14th, 1982 is a day I shall never forget. 60... that day, I stared death 61... the face.

Our flight was due to leave at 11 am that day, and I arrived 62... the airport with plenty of time to spare. We started boarding half 63... hour earlier. Most of us were holiday makers and there was a lot of laughing and joking going on. It was raining 64...but visibility was good, and 65... plane took 66... on time. The cabin staff were just beginning to bring round the duty-free goods, when the plane began to shake.

At first we thought we had just hit bad weather. We were told 67... sit down and fasten our seat belts. Then, suddenly, the front 68... the plane seemed to dip, and we realised we were speeding towards the ground. People screamed in panic. Strangers joined hands and prayed. 69... thought that we had more than a few minutes to live.

Then, just when we had given 70... all hope, we felt the plane level out, and slowly we began to gain height. 71... minutes later, the pilot announced that everything was now under control, and we all began to clap and cheer happily. Twenty minutes later, we landed safely. Experts are still investigating the cause of the incident, but until now they have found 72... real answers. As for me, I shall never feel really safe in 73... plane again. It was the most frightening experience of my life.

D. Choose the most appropriate modal verbs from the alternatives given in brackets. Write your choices in the spaces provided. (1/2 mark each)

a. In spite of all warnings about the dangers of smoking, many people still continue to smoke. Since smoking is harmful not just to smokers but to non-smokers too, it (74. should, shouldn't, needn't) be allowed at least in public places.

b. Quite a significant number of the students who took the final exam last year scored A's and B's. They (75. should have, can't have, must have) studied very well for that exam.

c. A week ago, I (76. must, have to, had to) see a friend who had been in hospital for a month. I went into his room but I couldn't find him there. At last I talked to a nurse who told me that I (77.needn't have gone, must have gone, needn't go) to the hospital, for the patient had already recovered and left for home.

d. Our instructor has told us that he is going to give us a test some time next week. Therefore, we (78. mustn't, needn't,must) be absent or we will lose some marks.

e. I saw the driver trying to stop the car before the accident occurred, but the car wouldn't stop. It (79. ought to,mustn't,can't) have been the driver's mistake.

PART IV: COMPOSITION (10 marks)

A. Put the following fragments in correct order to make meaningful sentences. Begin with the underlined words and DO NOT add or leave out any words. Write your answers in the spaces provided.

80. the world population/5.2 billion/is/<u>At present</u>
81. annually/will rise/until the end of the century/<u>This</u>/by 90 million
82. of each year's increase/<u>Eighty-four million</u>/in the poor countries/will be living.
83. growing/may stop/in 100 years from now/<u>The world's population</u>/at 10 billion.
84. it/by that time/if population control campaign/will rise to 14 billion/<u>However,</u>/fails.

Appendix 6.13 Test paper 3

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF LANGUAGE STUDIES

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE Time 2hrs45min
55 marks

FRESHMAN ENGLISH (101A)

Student's name _____I.D. No.___
Instructor's name _____Faculty ___
Department _____ Section ___

PART I: READING COMPREHENSION (15 marks)

Read the following two passages and answer the questions that follow according to the information in each passage.

Passage One

Drinks from Fruit and Grain

Early in the development of Agriculture men discovered how to make alcoholic drinks from grapes and corn. The ancient Egyptians drank both wine and beer, and the Greeks carried on a lively trade in wine.

Wine is fermented juice of fresh grapes. The juice of the wine grape contains sugar, and growths of yeast form on the outside of the grape skins. In wine making, the grapes are crushed in a wine press and the yeast converts the sugar to alcohol, when there is no air present, by a process called fermentation. Red wine is made from dark grapes, and white wine from white grapes or from dark grapes whose skins have been removed from the press at an early stage. The most famous wine growing countries are France, Germany and Italy. Wine was made in England in the Middle Ages, but the climate is not really suitable for grape vines. Wines must be drunk quickly once they are opened, otherwise bacteria will use the air to convert the alcohol to vinegar. The bacteria are killed by a higher alcohol content than is found in wine and that is why sherry and port, the specialities of Spain and Portugal, are fortified by the addition of spirits to the wine to make them last longer.

Beer is usually made from barley which is fermented with yeast to produce alcohol; it usually has a lower alcohol content than wine and thus like wine goes off quickly. Spirits have a higher alcohol content than beer or wine and are made by distillation from a base of grain or some other vegetable. Gin and vodka can be made from a variety of ingredients, including potatoes, but excluding grapes. Scotch whisky is obtained from a base of fermented barley, and brandy from a distillation of wine.

Many other things can be used to make alcoholic drinks. South American Indians make alcoholic drinks from cactus leaves. In East Africa maize or bananas are often used to make beer, and this in turn is distilled into a spirit.

(from The Penguin Book of the Natural World)

A. Complete the following table with information from Passage One by putting a tick mark (/) in the appropriate box. The column headed 'whisky' has been done for you as an example. (1/2 mark for each correct tick)

	whisky	brandy	wine	sherry	beer
1.made from grapes					
2.made from grain	/				
3.can be drunk long after it's opened	/				
4.contains no distilled alcohol.					
5.contains distilled alcohol	/				

B. Answer the following questions from Passage One in one or two sentences. No mark will be given for sentences or phrases taken from the passage which contain irrelevant information. (1 mark each)

6. Write the following four drinks in the order of their alcoholic strength, putting the strongest first: sherry, beer, whisky, wine. _____
7. Why is sugar important for making alcohol?

_____

8. What is vinegar?

_____ _____

Passage Two

The concept of "normal rainfall" has a vastly different meaning for African farmers than it does for agricultural planners in more temperate regions. Rainfall in Africa can vary by as much as 40 per cent from year to year, and droughts can persist for several years.

Those unique characteristics have often spelled disaster when American and European farming techniques are applied to African soils. According to the UN Food and Agricultural Organisation, the more than $1,000 million spent on rangelands management over the past fifteen years has been "largely wasted" on ill-founded projects based more on agricultural theories learned in developed countries than on the realities of the African environment.

Recent agricultural research has unearthed a variety of innovative ways to boost food production without degrading the environment and threatening future harvests. Among the most promising is intercropping.

Researchers and farmers are finding that many crops, trees, and other plants, when planted together, offer significant advantages over the green revolution's tenet of planting one crop over vast tracts of land. Trees can "pump" nutrients from the deep soil, making them available to more shallow-rooted crops. Trees also lessen wind and water erosion, hold rainwater, and retard the flow of nutrients from the soil. A Nigerian research group that planted shrubs among rows of crops had encouraging results when compared to a conventional plot, the mixed agro-forestry system not only yielded more food but also provided enough fuel wood from the shrubs that each hectare could meet the needs of four persons.

There are other novel applications for new technologies and traditional farming practices. Genetic engineering, as well as standard cross-breeding methods, offers new crop strains that can thrive with little rainfall, boost higher yields than native strains, and even resist pests without relying on chemicals. Researchers are also rediscovering and modifying old techniques to enhance production: building small dams to capture precious rainwater before it seeps into the ground, constructing rock embankments or bunks to fight erosion, practising no-till farming, controlling pests and diseases by natural means, using organic compost instead of chemical fertilizer, and establishing community feulwood lots to alleviate pressure on the forests.

(Taken from Topic Issue no. 184)

C. Choose the most appropriate completion according to the information in Passage Two. Write the letter of your choice in the space provided. (1/2 mark each)

9. The concept of "normal rainfall" has relatively the same meaning among Europeans because
   a. there is a lot of drought in Africa.
   b. rainfall can vary by as much as 40 per cent.
   c. rainfall variability in Europe is not significant.
   d. the agricultural planners are in more temperate regions.

10. What does "them" in line 18 refer to?
   a. soil b. trees c. nutrients d. crops

11. Intercropping is suggested as the most important technique of farming because
   a. it is financially economical.
   b. it is based on the experiences of temperate regions.
   c. it helps to degrade the environment.
   d. it is based on a technique that doesn't threaten future harvests.

12. The significant tenet of the green revolution is
   a. using a large space of land for a single crop.
   b. planting many crops, trees and plants on a small area.
   c. aiding trees to "pump" minerals from deep soil.
   d. removing more shallow-rooted crops.

13. The finding of the Nigerian research group
   a. disproves the basic theory of intercropping.
   b. has encouraged many African farmers.
   c. was based on intercropping.
   d. is a classical example of the green revolution.

14. One of the following is NOT true of genetic engineering.
   a. it includes the production of pesticides.
   b. it provides new crop strains.
   c. it is a method of crop cross-breeding.
   d. it helps boost crop yields.

D. Answer the following questions from Passage Two in one or two sentences. No marks will be given for sentences or phrases taken from the passage which contain irrelevant information. (1 mark each)

15. Why does the concept of "normal rainfall" have a different meaning for African farmers from what it does for European farmers?

_____

16. What was the result of the application of American and European methods of farming to African farming?

_____

17. Mention two things genetic engineering can provide for an African farmer.

_____

18. According to the author, how can deforestation due to the cutting of trees for fuelwood be tackled?

_____

PART II: VOCABULARY (10 marks)

A. In Column A are a number of words from Passage Two. Match each word with the word or phrase in Column B which has <u>almost the same meaning</u> as in the passage. Put the letter of your choice in the space provided. (1/2 marks each)

Column A	Column B	
19. wary	a. found	19.
20. disaster	b. new	20.
21. unearthed	c. relief	21.
22. offer	d. failure	22.
23. novel	e. differ	23.
	f. provide	
	g. book	

B. In Column A are a number of words from Passage Two. Match each word with the word or phrase in Column B which has almost the opposite meaning as in the passage. Put the letter of your choice in the space provided. (1/2 mark each)

Column A	Column B	
24. wasted	a. valueless	24.
25. degrade	b. increase	25.
26. lessen	c. reduce	26.
27. enhance	d. enrich	27.
28. precious	e. priceless	28.
	f. utilized properly	
	g. expensive	

C. Read the passage below and decide where the words given in the list best fit. Write your answers in the spaces provided. (1/2 mark each)

forced	get rid of	nervous	come up to	dented
gratified	dispute	provocative	ferocity	retaliated
gave up	deliberately	incident	came up to	give up

I've only once been attacked in the streets. It was a dark night and three boys 29... me. I felt a little 30... 'Can I have a light?' asked one with a sneer. 'No,' I replied. 'I 31... smoking years ago.' Then the one behind me grabbed my case. I 32... by kicking. They 33... me to the ground, took the bag and 34... kicked me again in the stomach as I lay there shouting. It was all over in a few minutes. I was alarmed by the 35... of the attack. However, I felt rather 36... when I thought of what they had stolen. It was an old, torn suitcase, filled with rubbish that I wanted to 37... In fact, I had been on my way to the rubbish pit when this 38... happened.

PART III: STRUCTURE AND USAGE (20 marks)

A. Choose the correct verb form from the alternatives given in brackets. Write your answers in the spaces provided. (1/2 mark each)

I can say that I am a successful businessman. Let me tell you what my life was like ten years ago. I (39.have been living,was living,had lived) in a small two-room house in the poorest part of the city. I (40.was,have been, was being) a shop assistant in Merkato and I (41.have been working,had been working,have worked) in the shop for three years but I (42.didn't manage will not manage,haven't managed) to save any money because I earned too little. However, luck was on my side. The shop owner offered me a deal. He said he would double my salary if I made his business successful and raised his profit by a 100% within two years. I accepted the offer and was successful.

Now, I (43. have run,am running, had run) his business and I (44.had already raised, have already raised,already raised) his profit by 150%. He (45. had been,is,will be) happy with my work and (46. has made,will have made,would have made) me his partner. I (47. will have worked,have been working,had been working) as his partner for over six months now. I (48.have moved,will have moved,had moved) into a bigger house in the central part of the city. My girl-friend, Tigist, is happy about that. We (49. have been, are going to be, would have been) married next June and our wedding (50. will be held, has been held,might have been held) at Ras Hotel, we hope. After we are married, we (51.have lived, will be living, were to live) together in my new house. Tigist likes it.

By 1992, I (52. will have bought,have bought,might have been buying) my own shop in piazza and I will be running my own business. There's nothing sweeter than the fruit of hard work, I always say.

B. Read the following text, and then change the numbered direct speech sentences into reported speech. Write your answers in the spaces provided. (1 mark each)

Let me tell you what happened in our physics class today. 53. The teacher came in and said, "Take out a piece of paper." I think he was going to give us a test. But all the students got confused and started talking. 54. The teacher got angry and asked, "What is the matter?" Then one student sitting at the back raised her hand. The teacher saw her and let her speak. 55. She stood up and said, "Matter is anything that has weight and occupies space." Then we all roared with laughter - including the teacher.

53. _____
54. _____
55. _____

C. Choose the most appropriate words or phrases from the list below to fill the blanks. Use one word or phrase only once. Write your answers in the spaces provided. (1/2 marks each)

any	the	of	in	some	little	anything
a	by	at	from	with	a few	nobody
an	for	on	to	a little	few	

Many people believe that there is life on Mars. I am one (56)... them. Just (57)... years ago, scientists also believed that there might be life on Mars. However, it is said that they have recently found out that there cannot be (58)... kind of life on Mars as it is too cold and too far from the sun. But who knows? (59)... my point of view, Mars and the other planets also might have living things on them; but these living things may not require the same kind of temperature, atmosphere, etc., as there is on earth, in order to be alive. (60)... example, there might be creatures who do not need oxygen to breathe or who can survive in (61)... temperature of - 200 degrees centigrade.

I know that very (62)... scientists will agree (63)... me and that I have (64) ... knowledge of the subject. I can't give you any evidence to prove what I am saying. But I believe (65)... expressing what I think even if it sounds ridiculous. (66)... the moment, (67)... knows for sure whether or not there is life on any planet except earth, but I am sure that in the future, scientists will find out the truth. (68)... best thing to do is to wait and see if (69)... happens.

D. Choose the most appropriate modal verbs from the alternatives given in brackets. Write your answers in the spaces provided. (1/2 mark each)

a. Elsa looks so wet and muddy. She (70. must have been, can't have been ought to have been) standing in the rain.

b. Mamush did not get good grades in his English examination. He (71. needn't have,must have,ought to have) studied hard.

c. I tried to phone you at 9 pm last night, but the phone just kept ringing and there was no answer. So, you (72.shouldn't have been,couldn't have been, ought not to have been) at home at that time.

d. There is a photocopier in the other room. You (73. mustn't have,ought not to have,needn't have)rewritten the ten pages from the book.

e. Desta frightened the little girl with a mask, and now she's crying. That was very naughty of him. He (74. needn't have,can't have,shouldn't have) done that to her.

f. I checked the calculation three times, and each time I got this same figure. So it (75. can't be,has to be,must be) wrong.

PART IV: COMPOSITION (10 marks)

A. Put the following fragments in correct order to make meaningful sentences. Begin with the underlined words and DO NOT add or leave out any words. Write your answers in the spaces provided. (1 mark each)

76. from the sun/ is called/ Light/ natural light
77. either chemically/ Artificial light/ or electrically/ can be produced
78. a candle/ by striking/ We produce/ a match/ chemical light/ or by burning
79. may be/ electric lamps/ in/ produced/ Electric light
80. As electricity/ heat is produced/ produces white light/ and/ the hot filament/ flows through the tungsten filament

76. _____
77. _____
78. _____
79. _____
80. _____

B. Write a paragraph of about 60 words using the notes given below. (5 marks)

Notes:
Name:Abbe Gubegna
Place and date of birth:Bahir Dar, 1934.
Education: -extensive church education, formal education
Profession:Author
Books written by him: 21 books in Amharic
2 books in English
Famous book: "Alweledim" in Amharic

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Appendix 6.2 Freshman English 101B Test papers

Appendix 6.21 Test paper 1

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF LANGUAGE STUDIES

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE Time 3hrs
50 marks

FRESHMAN ENGLISH (101B)

Student's name:_____ I.D. no._____
Instructor's name:_____Faculty _____
Department:_____ Section _____

PART I: READING COMPREHENSION (15 marks)

Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow.

Drug discoveries make headlines. But steady advances in laboratory technique seem calculated to bring on the yawns. An announcement in last week's Nature that some compounds related to diazepam, a tranquilliser, seem to stop the AIDS virus - at least in test-tubes - has had plenty of attention. Less has been said about improvements in ways of measuring the amount of virus in blood samples. These improvements may be as valuable as the compounds, or more so.

To spot a virus in the blood, take blood cells or plasma from a patient and incubate them with uninfected cells under conditions that the virus likes. Then test the cell culture for the virus. In the early years of AIDS' research it was notoriously hard to find virus particles in people. Trial and error have improved the finicky protocols for culturing cells. Instead of relying on the activity of a viral enzyme, they now spot the presence of the protein, called P24 antigen, which makes up the core of the virus itself.

Dr. David Ho and his colleagues at the University of California at Los Angeles Medical Centre have studied blood samples from 54 people with antibodies to HIV and from 22 uninfected people. In all those with antibodies they found blood cells carrying the virus and free-floating virus in the blood. They found none in the uninfected people. Such accuracy has never been achieved before. And the amount of HIV in the blood was much higher in those who had symptoms of disease than in those who did not.

In a paper published in the same issue of the New England Journal of Medicine as Dr. Ho's, a team from the University of Washington led by Dr. Robert Coombs reported similar results. They found infectious cells in 97% of the samples from infected people. But their virus particles were not as widespread as Dr. Ho's. They found the virus in 23% of the patients without symptoms, 45% of those with some, but not all, the

symptoms of AIDS, and 82% of those with full symptoms. It may be that the Washington team is using a less sensitive test, or that Dr. Ho's test sees some free virus where there is none.

Either way, direct measurements of the virus could make a big difference to some trials of treatments for AIDS. For people who are infected but not ill, any trial to find out whether a new drug will help them must, at the moment, continue until an appreciable number of them (those who are allotted placeboes in the trial) fall ill. If, rather than waiting for symptoms, such trials looked for variations in the amount of virus, then evidence of a drug's effectiveness - or lack of it - might be found much more quickly. If the drug works, those on the placebo could move to the drug before becoming ill.

Quick, small trials of people with AIDS are another use for the new virus-spotting techniques. It might be possible to tell if an anti-viral drug works by using only a dozen people and monitoring the virus in their blood for about six weeks. If the drug does not affect the virus in their blood streams, then a full-scale trial can be avoided.

Such trials are needed because stopping the virus from reproducing in cultures and having an effect in the body are different things. Consider the new family of drugs described in Nature by Dr. Rudi Pauwels and his team in Belgium. They describe a family of compounds that stops HIV from reproducing. Like AZT, the only antiviral drug approved for use against HIV, the compounds block part of the mechanism by which the virus gets its genes into host cells. The advantage of the new compounds is that the difference between HIV blocking doses and doses that kill the body's cells is larger. All this is encouraging but is not the same success with people.

Dr. Ho's paper describes a study of seven patients taking AZT. Their amounts of free virus were low, but the levels of infection in their blood cells stayed constant. This is because AZT stops infection but can do nothing for cells that are already infected. The drop in free virus may imply that most virus in the blood stream comes from newly infected cells - which would be useful to know. As new drugs come along viral measurements will illuminate their effects - even if they turn out not to tell the whole story. Because the measurements are extremely labour-intensive, it is unlikely that they will replace all other markers, or become common practice in hospitals. But in some clinical trials they may begin to make a difference perhaps within the next year.

(Taken from The Economist Feb. 10,1990)

A. According to the passage,choose the most appropriate sentence completion from the choices given and write the correct letter in the space provided. (1/2 mark each)

1. According to the passage, drug discoveries
   a. are given less space in newspapers.
   b. had plenty of attention.
   c. seem to stop the AIDS epidemic.
   d. have made few advances.

2. The modern method of identifying the presence of AIDS virus is to

a. rely on the activity of a viral system.
b. spot the presence of P24 antigen.
c. break the core of the virus.
d. culture all suspected cells.

3. Dr. Ho and his colleagues
a. established a more accurate relationship between the amount of HIV in blood and symptoms of disease.
b. took 76 people who were infected for their study.
c. were able to formulate drugs for the disease.
d. used diazepam to activate the HIV in the blood.

4. Dr. Coombs and his group
a. were surely using a less sensitive test.
b. repeated the experiment undertaken by Dr. Ho and his team and found the same results.
c. disproved the results of the experiment made by Dr. Ho and his team.
d. reported that they had similar results.

5. Dr. Coombs and his team
a. found the AIDS virus in 23% of the patients without symptoms.
b. isolated the AIDS virus for culturing and treatment.
c. saw some free virus where there was none.
d. discovered AIDS virus in almost 97% of the people without the symptoms

6. A full-scale trial on infected patients can be avoided
a. if drugs can be used extensively.
b. by using the techniques used by Dr. Ho.
c. by employing the new virus spotting techniques.
d. if appropriate treatments could be provided.

7. The compounds described by Dr. Pauwels and his team are very much similar to AZT because
a. they are anti-viral drugs.
b. they facilitate viral growth.
c. they help to reproduce HIV.
d. they get their genes into host cells.

8. The author feels that
a. the techniques for detecting HIV are still backward.
b. HIV reproduction can successfully be blocked by using AZT.
c. the attempts to improve techniques of detection are quite encouraging.
d. the new drugs are successful with many people.

9. Dr. Ho's research paper
a. described the medical history of seven people.
b. illuminated recent research findings.
c. explained the results of AZT taking patients.

d. expressed the desperate situation regarding AIDS.

10.One of the following is NOT true of AZT.
a. It is antiviral.
b. It is effective in stopping infection.
c. It cures quite effectively infected cells.
d. It is the only one approved for use against HIV.

B. Answer the following questions according to the information in the passage. No marks will be given for sentences or phrases copied from the passage which contain irrelevant information. (1 mark each)

11. According to the writer, what should be given as much attention to as the discovery of a new drug for AIDS?

_____

12. What was very difficult to find during the early years of AIDS research?

_____

13. What was the major discovery of Dr. Ho and his colleagues?

_____

14. How was Dr. Coombs' and his team's finding different from that of Dr. Ho's and his colleagues?

_____

15. What are the two advantages of establishing the number of AIDS virus in a patient?

_____

16. What compounds block part of the mechanism by which the AIDS virus gets its genes into host cells?

_____

17. How would viral measurements be of help for new drugs for AIDS?

_____

C. Write correct and full questions which would produce the following answers. (1 mark each)

18. related to diazepam

_____

19. the core of AIDS virus.

_____

20. a full-scale trial can be avoided.

_____

PART II: VOCABULARY (10 marks)

A. Choose the most suitable word or phrase from the list below to fill the blank. Write your answers in the spaces provided. (1/2 mark each)

relish crux eligible offence fell through
called at pleaded embarrassed discernible ban
predicament called on solution bulk

21. It took them a long time to identify the ... of the problem
22. The foot-prints left by the burglar were quite ... on the muddy surface.
23. The way he behaved ... most of the spectators.
24. The apparent ... of third world countries is due to shaky political systems and chronic underdevelopment.
25. Most of the members of that department were ... for promotion.
26. It is a(n) ... to drive a car under the influence of alcohol in most countries.
27. Our scheme ... because of shortage of very essential raw materials.
28. The ... on smoking drastically affected the profit of tobacco factories in the country.
29. Since most of the workers were on an annual leave, the ... of the work had to be covered by part-timers.
30. Bedilu ... his friends just in time to say farewell before they departed.

B. Complete the following sentences with the appropriate form of the words below. You will need to either use them as nouns or adjectives. (1/2 mark each)

qualify hand perform produce inhabit plant detect demarcate

31. There were only a(n) ... of spectators in the stadium because many thought that the match would not be so much impressive.
32. Sugar ... cannot be enhanced without expanding the sugar cane plantation.
33. The ... used the evidence he gathered from eye-witnesses to sue that company.
34. The ... of the region had to work day and night to avert flood catastrophe.
35. Most of the workers had the ... to operate the newly imported machine.

C. Supply the necessary prepositions or adverbial particles to fill the blanks below. Write your answers in the spaces provided.

Most people like to listen to news 36..... the radio or TV. Some would like to read the news 37.... official newspapers. Others prefer the private media. Few people enjoy reading or listening 38..... news they are not interested in. Most of them say that such news turns them 39..... if it falls short 40..... their expectations.

PART III: STRUCTURE AND USAGE (20 marks)
A. Put the verb in brackets into the correct infinitive or gerund form. (1/2 mark)

41. The committee members discussed the matter for almost three hours but failed (reach) a common decision.
42. No one can make the manager (change) his mind once he has decided.
43. Mesfin doesn't mind (help) his wife at home.

44. The thief said that he was compelled (steal) by hunger.
45. I told her to stay at home and read but she insisted on (go) out with me.
46. When my friend came to talk to me about our assignment, I had already finished (do) it.
47. Her parents do not let her (go) to a night club alone.

B. Put the verb in brackets into Passive form and correct tense. (1/2 mark each)

48. We must always (inform) about what goes on around us.
49. A very good play (stage) at the National Theatre at present.
50. The injured woman (take) to the hospital immediately after the accident.
51. Some changes (make) in the country's economic policy recently.
52. It (feel) that such changes will help in improving the life of the people.
53. If it had not been for the war, many starving people (save).
54. Thousands of Italian soldiers (kill) at the battle of Adwa.

C. Complete the fragments below to make meaningful & correct sentences(1 mark)

55.We all reached home in time although _____.
56. She looked at me as if _____.
57. _____whenever it sees a stranger.
58. We are all expected _____.
59. However hard he studies,_____.
60. _____why he never wants to see his old friend.
61. Had I been a millionaire, _____.

D. Rewrite the following sentences in the Passive. (1 mark each)

62. Thomas had fixed the car before he sold it._____.
63. Mel Brooks is making a new movie in 1990._____.
64. They will install a hydro-electric power plant in the future._____
65. The thieves would have stolen all the gold if the man had not stopped them at the airport._____.
66. The doctor has advised her to go on a diet to lose weight. _____.
67. People speak Amharigna in Harar. _____.

PART IV: COMPOSITION (5 marks)

Write a paragraph of about 80 words describing Dire Dawa. Use the notes given below.

Location:Dire Dawa Autonomous Region, about 380 kms southeast of Addis
Population:90,000
Size:about 20 sq kms
Climate:Temperate - hot/dry, warm/windy
Facilities: Hotels, schools, market places

Appendix 6.22 Test paper 2

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF LANGUAGE STUDIES

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE Time 3hrs
50 marks

FRESHMAN ENGLISH (101B)

DIRECTIONS:

This exam paper contains four parts. You should answer all of them. Give your answers on the separate answer sheet provided. Submit only the Answer Sheet after you finish.

PARTI: READING COMPREHENSION (17 marks)

Read the following two passages and answer the questions that follow according to the information in the passages.

Passage One

Two Cars Compared

Ford Escort
Even before the new Escort was announced, we felt that due to Ford's complete common sense approach to motor car design and production, the new car would be a strong contender for our best car of the year. But there are a number of short-comings which, frankly speaking, leave us a little disappointed with the new front-wheel-drive car. The first criticism centres on the ride, which we feel is far too hard and joggled for comfort, and even after the company sorted out the bad batch of rear shock absorbers on early cars the fault still remains. Secondly, the seats are rather uncomfortable, the front ones being a little too hard. Otherwise, the Ford is a competent all-round car with lively performance from the 1300cc engine and good road-holding to complement it. It's a practical design, but the tailgate sill is too high.

Citroen Dyane
Old fashioned isn't the word for the Citroen Dyane - prehistoric comes closer to describing its true vintage. But that hardly matters because the antiquated Dyane defines a care-free classless life style and that makes the car a little difficult to assess by modern standards. Nevertheless, the Citroen does offer extremely comfortable seats (the rear ones can be easily removed for extra luggage space) and the long suspension travel gives an easy soft ride, even if at the expense of massive amounts of body roll which really does make sharp cornering look difficult and alarming. The 602cc engine is desperately slow, but it does not take long to become accustomed to a slower driving style, and fuel economy is legendary with 50 mpg being regularly attainable. In contrast to this, though, servicing is not simple.

A. Put a tick (/) in the appropriate column on the Answer sheet to show whether the statements are true for the Ford Escort or the Citroen Dyane. (1/2 mark each)

	Ford Escort	Citroen Dyane
1. more modern car		
2. more comfortable seats		
3. more comfortable to ride in		
4. more economical use of petrol		
5. bigger engine		
6. faster car		
7. better cornering		

B. Choose the best answer or sentence completion from those given and write the letter of your choice on your Answer sheet against the appropriate number. (1/2 mark each)

8. The purpose of the writer seems to be to
   a. advertise the two cars and persuade people to buy them.
   b. persuade people to buy the Escort rather than the Citroen.
   c. persuade people to buy the Citroen rather than the Escort.
   d. give an unbiased description of the two so that people can decide for themselves.

9. These passages would likely to appear in
   a. an advertisement for the cars.
   b. a daily newspaper.
   c. an independent car magazine.
   d. a brochure issued by the car companies making the cars.

10.The writers expected the new Escort to be a contender for "best car of the year" because
   a. it had a number of shortcomings.
   b. in the past the manufacturers had always produced good cars.
   c. the manufacturers were sensible.
   d. they had heard so much about the new car before it was produced.

11.'Old fashioned isn't the word' means
   a. The car is not very old fashioned, in fact it's quite modern.
   b. The car is very, very old fashioned.
   c. It is a vintage car and therefore not at all old fashioned.
   d. The writer can't find an appropriate word to describe the car.

12.The servicing of the Citroen is
   a. easy because of the legendary fuel economy.
   b. difficult because of the legendary fuel economy.
   c. easy even though its use of petrol is very economical.
   d. difficult but at least its use of petrol if economical.

13.'it' in line 19 of the text about the Citroen refers to
   a. the 602cc engine.
   b. the time it takes to become accustomed to slower driving.
   c. driving desperately slowly.
   d. the body roll that makes sharp cornering alarming.

14.Which is the best summary of the text about the Citroen?
   a. This car is very slow, and tends to roll over. It is also very old fashioned and not easy to service.
   b. This car is too old fashioned to assess in modern terms, but is suitable for those who would like a free classless life style.
   c. This is a very comfortable car with good seats. It's fuel economy is legendary and thus it would be suitable for anyone who would like a free classless style.
   d. It is not a modern car and is very slow to drive, difficult to service and bad at cornering. However, it is very comfortable and economical to run.

Passage Two

A westerner soon notices something odd when travelling through the hilly farmlands of Ethiopia. The flat lands, the ones you would expect a farmer to plough first, are often left untouched while farmers plough the steepest hills, causing serious soil erosion in many places. At the ILCA Jutzi explains that the problem arises from the jet-black soils made of heavy clay called vertisols, which cover much of the country. Normally, clay soils comprise around 35 per cent clay; vertisols contain 70 per cent, and feel like modelling clay. Ethiopia has 13 million hectares of vertisols. Of that, 8 million hectares are in the heavily populated highlands.

Only 2 million hectares of Ethiopia's vertisols are ploughed. Most of the flat fields are left as grazing land because the soil becomes too waterlogged to grow crops. Now scientists at the ILCA think they have found a cheap way to drain the land. The discovery could revolutionize food production in Ethiopia.

Whenever it rains, the tiny particles that make up clay quickly acquire a shell of water. Once this happens, they do not give up the water easily. A vertisol full of these tiny particles has an immense capacity to hold water. In a climate such as Ethiopia's, where rain is seasonal, vertisols can be an advantage. They may need only one good drenching to store enough moisture to see a crop through to maturity. But vertisols are also difficult to handle. When they dry out, they become too hard to plough. They can be ploughed only after it rains, so crops must be sown while the soil is wet.

Many crops cannot tolerate waterlogged clays, which lack oxygen. So farmers must either

plant varieties that tolerate waterlogging, such plants do not have high yields, or sowing must wait until the land has dried a little after ploughing. This shortens the growing season, which can reduce yields.

(Taken from New Scientist Oct. 1987.)

C. Answer each of the following questions in one or two sentences according to the information in Passage Two. Write your answer in the space provided on the answer sheet. (1/2 mark each)

15. What looks odd to a westerner who travels through the hilly farmlands of Ethiopia?
16. What is the major disadvantage of having a high percentage of vertisols?
17. How can the flat fields that are left as grazing land be changed into fertile farmlands?
18. Why are vertisols an advantage in countries such as Ethiopia?
19. What may shorten the growing season?

D. Write questions that would produce the following answers in the space provided on the answer sheet. The questions must be grammatically correct and related to Passage Two. (1 mark each)

20. the jet-black soils made of clay.
21. because the soil becomes too waterlogged to grow crops.
22. they do not give up the water easily.
23. only one drenching.
24. they do not have high yields.

PART II: VOCABULARY (10 marks)

A. Find a word or phrase from Passage Two which has the same meaning with the given expression. Write your answer in the space provided on the Answer Sheet. (1/2 mark each)

25. observes (par.1)
26. not ploughed (par.1)
27. evolves; results (par.1)
28. make up; consist of; include (par.1)
29. swampy (par.2)
30. make a complete positive change in (par.2)
31. lose; abandon (par. 3)
32. great; large (par.3)
33. thorough wetting (par.3)
34. endure (par.4)

B. Read the passage below and decide where each word given in the list best fits. Use one word only once. Remember that you may have to change the form of the word. Eg. if it is a verb, you may need to use it as a verb, noun, adverb or adjective. Write your

answer in the space provided on the Answer Sheet. (1/2 mark each)

rub produce go cultivate reassure restore set
endemic outbreak remedy predicament wipe epidemic

In 1978 there was a(n) 35... of cholera in our town of Iringa, Tanzania, with ten people infected. The government told us to boil our water, wash our hands and avoid eating fruit and vegetables.

This, they felt sure, would prevent cholera becoming a(n) 36.... throughout the region. We were also not allowed to sell our farm 37.... in the market or to travel outside the town. We were frightened of catching the disease but they gave us frequent 38... saying that we were safe if we did as we were told. We were however in a difficult 39.... because if we continued the 40... of our land we couldn't sell or eat the vegetables we grew. Soon the government brought more medicine and injected us all. This 41... the situation and cholera was completely 42... out in our area. After a month they announced the 43... of our right:. to travel and sell vegetables in the market. We were happy on the first day when we 44... out for market with over a month's supply of food to sell.

PART III: STRUCTURE AND USAGE (13 marks)

A. Fill each blank space in the following passage with the most appropriate preposition or particle. Give your answer in the space provided on the Answer Sheet. (1/2 marks each)

Policeman - "Would you tell us what you were doing 45.... 9 and 11 pm on Tuesday?"
Witness - "Well, I was watching television until 9:30 pm. Then, I turned 46... the television and sat 47... my desk to do some work. I selected some pictures and articles in some old newspapers and cut them 48...Then, I carefully arranged them on the table in order. I was almost finished when I heard a crash on my window, and the wind blew in and scattered everything on the floor. All the pictures were mixed 49... and it took me nother hour to work 50... which pictures was which. So, you see, I was in my room all the time."

B. Choose the most appropriate verb from the alternatives given in brackets. Write your answer in the space provided on the Answer Sheet. (1/2 mark each)

My son:
When people begin by saying, "I don't enjoy (51.gossip,to gossip,gossiping) but ..." you can be sure that they intend (52.to gossip,gossiping,to be gossiping). So try not (53.listening,to listen,to have listened) to them. If you allow them (54.to go on, going on,to have gone on), they will keep(55.to tell,telling,to be telling) you more and more awful things about people you respect. So, I advise you (56. to stay,staying,to have stayed) away from such people. I'd prefer you (57. to have spent, to have been

spending,spending)your time with people who discuss ideas. That will broaden your mind.

I remember (58. taking,to take,to have taken) you to football matches every Sunday when you were little. I regret not (59. to be,having been, to have been) able to spend more time with you. It seems (60.being,to be,having been) a bit too late for that now.

All these years, I (61.have been known,have known,be known) you as a very good boy. You have always (62.make,made,making) me very proud of you. Last week, I (63. told,have been told,was told) that you are keen on becoming a business manager. You (64. have said,are said,will be said) to have all the qualities this business needs. I (65. please,am pleased,pleased) to hear this.

As you know, I have a bad heart and I (66.have been advised,have advised,advised) to retire. I have, therefore, decided that you are to take over my job. You will receive the offer letter soon. You are expected to start next month, and believed (67.to be,to have been,being) able to run it well. As you (68. offered, have offered,are offered) a job at your own grandfather's firm, you won't (69. deny,be denied,have been denied) any of the privileges and facilities this firm provides. Just promise me one thing, my son. Promise me never (70. to have,having,to have had) anything to do with gossip-mongers. Just promise me that.

PART IV: COMPOSITION (10 marks)

A. Write a paragraph of about 100 words on Causes of Desertification using the notes given below in the space provided on the answer sheet.

-Consequences of population increase
1.cutting down of fallow periods 2. decline in the vegetation cover
3. increasing erosion
-Deforestation
1.clearing forests for farming 2.cutting trees for fuel-wood
-Overgrazing 1. increasing number of livestock
-Poor methods of farming
1. not using terracing 2. not practising crop-rotation

B. Write a paragraph of about 60 words in the space provided on the answer sheet using the following sentence as the first sentence of your paragraph. (5 marks)

Life as a university student is both satisfying and frustrating. ....

Appendix 6.23 Test paper 3

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF LANGUAGE STUDIES

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE Time 3hrs
50 marks

FRESHMAN ENGLISH (101B)

DIRECTIONS:

This exam paper contains four parts. You should answer all of them. Give your answers on the separate answer sheet provided. Submit only the answer sheet after you finish.

PART I: READING COMPREHENSION (17 marks)

Read the following two passages and answer the questions that follow according to the information in each passage.

Passage One

Dying Stars ... Living Planets

The old belief that the universe never changes is quite wrong. Even before the invention of the telescope, astronomers noticed that bright stars suddenly appear in the sky, and then later disappear. These stars were called 'novae' because they were thought to be new. In fact we now know that they are really old stars which are slowly dying. A recent case of a nova occurred in 1918, and one of the few people who saw this was the American astronomer Edward Bernard. He was driving along in a car, occasionally looking up into the sky. Suddenly he noticed a star that he had never seen before, and exclaimed "That star should not be there!" He was in fact watching the explosion of a nova.

Novae are old stars which are slowly dying. As they do so, they let out huge clouds of material, sometimes as large as the earth, and these explode into space at a speed of about 8,000,000 kilometres per hour. When this happens, the hotter parts of the star become visible, and this is why novae are so bright. Although the explosions are huge on a human scale, they only consume a small part of the dying star's energy. The death is a slow one, and the star may continue to explode for thousands of years. Indeed, there are even some stars which explode once a fortnight.

There are other old stars which do not die slowly, but are completely destroyed by one great explosion. These are known as 'supernovae'. The explosion of a supernova is

equivalent to about a million, million, million, million hydrogen bombs going off at the same time. Just before the explosion the star's density becomes very great and it spins at a very high speed. A matchbox of material taken from the star at that time would weigh about 1,000 tons, and the star would be turning at about 16,000,000 kilometres per hour. The explosion itself occurs suddenly, in the space of a minute, but the supernova continues to shine long after the event. One supernova which Chinese astronomers observed in 1054 can still be seen by us today. It has been shining for at least nine hundred years.

A. Put a tick (/) in the appropriate column on the Answer Sheet to show whether the statements are true for the novae or the supernovae. (1/2 mark each)

	Novae	Supernovae
1. They die slowly.		
2. They die quickly.		
3. One explosion each only.		
4. Many explosions over a long time.		
5. Spin fast before exploding.		
6. Shine for a very long time.		
7. Appear, then disappear.		

B. Choose the most appropriate answer, and write the letter that represents your choice of the answer in the space provided on the Answer Sheet. (1/2 mark each)

8. "Nova" is a latin word. From the context we can tell that it means
   a. a star b. old c. new d. an explosion

9. Edward Bernard had never seen that particular star before because
   a. he hadn't looked up at that particular spot.
   b. it was a new star.
   c. it was a dead star until that point in time.
   d. it hadn't been bright enough to see.

10. Novae and supernovae
   a. could not be seen until the invention of the telescope.
   b. were first recognized by Edward Bernard.
   c. had been seen but not understood long before that time.
   d. are newly formed stars.

11. When a novae explodes what we actually see is
   a. the hottest part of the star.
   b. huge clouds of material exploding into space.
   c. material travelling at 8,000,000 kph.
   d. a small part of the star's dying energy.

12. 'so' in line 10 refers to
   a. let out clouds of materials.
   b. explode.
   c. die slowly.
   d. old stars.

13. 'it' in line 21 refers to
   a. the star.
   b. the star's density.
   c. the explosion.
   d. a matchbox of materials.

14. The author mentions the matchbox of material to show that just before explosion the star
   a. becomes very small.
   b. becomes very dense.
   c. spins very fast.
   d. is still made of matter.

Passage Two

THE HIGHLANDS of Ethiopia have always been washing away in the rain. Ancient Egypt grew from the Ethiopian silt that the Nile carried to its farms. An Ottoman ruler of Egypt once assured the Ethiopian court that as he already received the best of Ethiopia, he had no interest in conquering "the residue".

Nowadays, Ethiopia's soil washes away substantially faster than the rocks are weathered to replace it. Soil that has been productive for centuries is dwindling to fields of stones. Draining Ethiopia's black clay soils might eventually open up more flat land, but for the moment, most of the farms in Ethiopia are on some kind of slope, to avoid waterlogging.

Ethiopians pay a price for this in soil erosion. Rain falls there, not in gentle showers, but where turbulent pockets of air form storm clouds. The torrential rain sluices away tonnes of soil over the sloping ground. The problem is exacerbated because, today, fields are rarely left fallow. So there is little natural vegetation to retard erosion.

There is a way of farming hill sides intensively without losing the hill, and that is to form the soil into terraces. "But," says Samuel Jutzi at ILCA, "techniques to control soil erosion didn't evolve in Ethiopian agriculture, because at lower population levels, the problem wasn't pressing. Now the situation is out of control." "The trouble with

erosion," says Jutzi, "is that the farmer rarely perceives the seriousness of having less soil. Farmers say it has been here for generation, and do not see why a change in practice is necessary". Soil erosion depresses yields long before the fields lose too much soil to be farmed.

The finer particles of soil leave first: the soil becomes coarser and water permeates more easily. This means that the soil dries more quickly, and that rain runs of the surface faster, increasing erosion. These shallower, coarse soils hold less water through the growing season, so they need more frequent and regular rain to sustain the crop in Ethiopia; soils rarely receive this. Meanwhile, the fine soil washes downhill and streams clog with silt. Uphill, the reduced capacity of the soil to hold water causes streams to dry.

(Taken from New Scientist Oct.1,1987)

C. Answer each of the following questions in one or two sentences according to the information in Passage Two. Write your answers in the space provided in the Answer Sheet. (1 mark each)

15. What did the Ottoman ruler of Egypt mean when he said he already received the best of Ethiopia?

16. What does "this" in para. 3 line 10 refer to?

17. Mention two reasons why soil erosion is serious in Ethiopia.

18. According to the writer, what is one method of combatting soil erosion and why is it unpopular among the Ethiopian peasants?

19. Why is that there are not may streams on the highlands of Ethiopia?

D. Write questions that would produce the following answers in the space provided on the Answer Sheet. The questions must be grammatically correct and related to Passage Two. (1 mark each)

20. Ethiopian silt
21. to avoid waterlogging
22. because fields are rarely left fallow
23. at lower population levels
24. the shallower and coarse soils

PART II: VOCABULARY (10 marks)

A. Find a word from Passage Two which has the same meaning with the given expression. Write your answer in the space provided on the Answer Sheet. (1/2 mark each)

25. guaranteed (par.1)
26. that which remains after a part is taken (par.1)
27. largely (par.2)
28. finally (par.2)
29. mild (par.3)
30. characterized by wildly irregular and fierce movement (par. 3)
31. washes off with a rush of water (par.3)
32. worsened (par.3)
33. serious; calling for immediate attention (par.4)
34. lowers both in quantity and quality (par.4)

B. Read the passage below and decide where each word given in the list best fits. Remember that you may have to change the form of the word. E.g. if it is a verb, you may need to use it as a verb, noun, adverb, or adjective. Write your answer in the space provided on the Answer Sheet.(1/2 mark each)

confide return destroy predicament turn consume contribute
setting argue organise out depart equip

When we set sail on Wednesday morning we were confident that we'd arrive safely. It was a five hour journey but we had plenty of spare 35... such as extra oars, sails, and a rudder. We hadn't eaten before 36... out but we had plenty of food for 37... on the journey. However after an hour a fierce storm broke 38... and tossed the boat up and down. Our sail tore and we'd have been in a dangerous 39... if we hadn't brought a spare sail. Some us wanted to return to Bahr Dar, but others refused. There was a fierce 40... and eventually we all agreed to 41... back. The captain told us that such storms were usually short but could be very 42...; he'd already lost one boat in such a storm. When we arrived back we agreed to 43... another trip on Saturday. The captain agreed to take us provided we all made a further 44... of 20 *Birr* each towards the cost.

PART III: STRUCTURE AND USAGE (13 marks)

A. Fill each blank space in the following paragraph with the most appropriate preposition or particle. Give your answer in the space provided on the Answer Sheet. (1/2 mark each)

As a write, I seem to spend most of my time working at home sitting 45... my desk. I don't see people regularly 46... members of my family. 47... fact, I feel I'm rather cut 48... from the life outside. However, I read newspapers and listen to the radio everyday. I also take part 49... a few seminars every year and here I sometimes run 50... some old friends.

B. Choose the most appropriate verb from the given alternatives in the brackets, and write your answer in the space provided on the Answer Sheet. (1/2 mark each)

I still remember what used to lie in store for us on our return to school from the holidays. The guava trees in the school yard would be in full leaf again, and the old leaves would be strewn around in scattered heaps. In some places there were even more than just heaps of them: it would be a muddy sea of leaves.

"Get all that swept up!" the headmaster (51. tells, would tell, would be told) us. "I want the whole place cleaned up, at once!"

"At once!" There was enough work there (52. to last, lasted, last) us for over a week, especially since the only tools with which we (53. provided, provide, were provided) were our hands, our fingers and our nails.

"Now see that it (54. does, is done, did) properly and be quick about it," the headmaster would say to the older pupils, "or you'll have to answer for it!"

So at an order from the older boys, we would all line up like peasants about (55. to reap, reap, reaping) or (56. gleaning, gleaned, glean) a field and we would set to work like members of a chain-gang. In the school yard there was one part where the closely planted trees grew in a hopeless tangle of leaves and branches. The sun (57. couldn't be penetrated, couldn't penetrate, wasn't penetrated) here, and the acrid stench of decay lingered in the undergrowth even at the height of the summer.

If the work was not going as quickly as the headmaster expected, the big boys, instead of (58. give, to give, giving) us a helping hand, used to find it simple to whip us with branches (59. pulled, pull, being pulled) from the trees. Springy switches of guava used to whistle piercingly, and fall like flails of fire on our backsides. Our flesh stung and smarted, while tears of anguish (60. spring, sprang, were sprung) from our eyes.

In order to avoid these blows, we used to bribe our tyrants with the food which we used to bring for our midday meal. And if we happened to have any money on us, the coins changed hands at once. If we did not do this, if we were afraid of (61. to go, going, go) home with an empty stomach or an empty purse, the blows would be redoubled. They (62. administered, administer, were administered) with such furious generosity that even a deaf mute would have gathered that we (63. were flogging, were being flogged, flogged) not so much to force us to work but rather (64. lashing, lash, to lash) us into a state of submissiveness in which we would be only too glad to give up our food and money.

Occasionally, one of us, (65. worn, wearing, wore) out by such calculated cruelty, would have the courage to complain to the headmaster. He would of course be very angry, but the punishment he inflicted on the older boys was always negligible compared to what they (66. were done, had been done, had done) to us. And the fact is that however much we (67. complained, were complained, were being complained), our situation didn't improve in the slightest. Perhaps we should have let our parents (68. to know, know, knowing) what was going on, but somehow we never dreamed of doing so; I don't know whether it was loyalty or pride that (69. kept, was kept keep) us silent, but I can see now

that we were foolish (70. keep, to keep, be kept) quiet, for such beatings were completely at variance with our passion for independence and equality.

PART IV: COMPOSITION (10 marks)

A. Write a paragraph of about 100 words on Possible Causes of Road Accidents using the notes given below in the space provided on your Answer Sheet. (5 marks)

- driving too fast
- drinking and driving
- failing to watch what is going on around
- failing to give signals when necessary
- mechanical failure in the vehicle
- pedestrians crossing roads at dangerous places

B. Write a paragraph of about 60 words using the following sentences as the first sentence of your paragraph.

Deforestation is a serious problem threatening our environment.

THE END

Appendix 7 The pilot study

Appendix 7.1 The pilot study group

0 001 11 19 06 14 13 42 31 06 10 09 11 08 32 33
0 002 05 05 09 09 02 23 00 08 02 08 02 03 00 18
0 003 11 10 05 12 08 33 29 04 05 05 05 04 32 34
0 004 09 21 07 10 13 47 42 07 08 09 07 08 00 41
0 005 10 22 17 13 12 43 00 06 05 04 07 07 35 33
0 006 00 13 07 08 15 46 39 06 10 11 12 12 45 40
0 007 05 06 01 11 10 20 00 05 02 04 06 03 00 23
0 008 09 22 10 09 11 47 29 06 09 08 08 06 00 34
0 009 04 12 05 06 04 40 25 10 03 05 04 06 00 30
0 010 05 12 06 12 08 35 28 03 04 06 07 05 00 24
0 011 06 13 05 09 11 41 33 07 08 11 09 08 36 36
0 012 10 16 03 10 06 37 25 04 07 05 08 03 00 30
0 013 09 18 06 09 10 45 39 05 07 09 13 06 43 41
0 014 09 14 06 09 00 35 31 10 07 06 05 08 41 31
0 015 09 09 04 06 [illegible] 28 21 07 05 03 06 03 28 26
0 016 11 10 05 09 07 50 24 03 03 03 04 04 32 33
0 017 08 12 01 02 13 23 26 03 02 04 02 03 00 33
0 018 06 21 07 10 08 33 00 06 09 08 06 05 00 31
0 019 05 05 05 10 08 25 00 04 01 04 02 04 00 21
0 020 08 16 06 07 03 33 33 08 06 08 05 01 00 29
0 021 00 07 01 09 10 36 27 06 04 09 06 03 36 31
0 022 08 08 06 10 11 40 31 05 06 05 11 05 33 38
0 023 09 14 09 06 10 46 39 09 08 10 06 04 34 42
0 024 00 11 04 10 08 41 34 00 00 00 00 00 38 36
0 025 09 15 07 09 05 37 29 06 00 06 07 06 00 34
0 026 07 11 07 10 04 38 35 05 06 07 06 07 33 34
0 027 10 11 06 09 03 36 37 05 12 04 08 05 39 36
0 028 10 11 10 10 12 47 39 04 10 08 06 03 00 39
0 029 10 16 14 11 15 52 45 10 10 15 10 06 52 46
0 030 08 17 08 10 09 45 37 00 05 07 07 06 00 39
0 056 10 05 10 11 00 39 00 09 05 06 07 08 41 37
0 057 11 05 05 08 05 48 36 03 09 08 04 04 42 39
0 058 09 16 09 13 15 44 47 08 10 11 09 10 51 44
0 059 06 11 01 09 07 40 29 08 06 03 06 09 33 34
0 060 08 06 08 04 09 41 36 10 04 09 06 06 39 35
0 061 11 00 00 00 00 33 24 05 06 08 04 00 24 31
0 062 06 11 10 12 07 42 39 05 08 09 06 10 41 36
0 063 09 00 00 00 00 43 42 07 06 09 07 09 42 39
0 064 09 00 00 00 00 41 31 08 11 04 08 05 38 37
0 065 06 10 05 05 07 39 38 06 07 06 04 06 35 35
0 066 10 09 00 08 09 32 20 06 03 07 01 07 21 29
0 067 09 00 00 00 00 44 40 04 13 10 09 10 34 38
0 068 12 14 09 15 12 47 43 08 00 00 00 00 41 41
0 069 06 16 04 11 08 46 33 08 09 12 10 09 40 36

0 070 10 14 06 08 10 37 30 07 06 12 05 05 31 30
0 071 09 09 04 07 09 36 38 09 05 07 07 06 39 36
0 072 04 07 05 04 07 31 27 05 09 06 04 06 27 27
0 073 05 11 05 12 01 28 32 06 04 07 05 05 29 31
0 074 11 00 00 00 00 46 41 11 06 12 06 07 49 46
0 075 10 14 06 10 08 43 37 06 08 06 09 04 34 35
0 076 09 05 05 08 06 25 13 07 04 05 06 00 24 21
0 077 10 01 04 07 08 43 38 07 08 07 06 00 36 36
0 078 13 15 01 13 12 50 44 09 06 08 09 09 45 44
0 079 12 12 13 14 13 52 46 11 13 07 08 11 51 47
0 080 10 00 00 00 00 44 27 08 04 08 08 04 32 35
0 081 00 10 05 10 03 00 16 05 00 04 04 01 18 24
0 082 08 09 05 07 06 41 41 07 05 02 04 09 40 39
0 083 00 07 05 11 09 36 25 06 04 05 07 06 32 25
0 084 10 14 09 00 00 43 38 07 07 09 07 06 41 36
0 085 00 14 08 11 12 00 42 06 08 08 08 07 42 41
0 086 00 05 04 06 02 00 11 03 09 05 06 06 24 23
0 087 00 13 00 09 14 00 28 03 07 10 10 07 36 35

Key to the above

Column	Description
1	group number (0 = study, 1 = control)
2 - 4	subject number
5 - 6	reading comprehension test result / out of 15
7 - 8	geography cloze test /out of 25
9 - 10	history cloze test /out of 25
11 - 12	philosophy cloze /out of 25
13 - 14	political economy /out of 25
15 - 16	Freshman English 101A /out of 55
17 - 18	Freshman English 101B /out of 50
19 - 20	reading comprehension post test
21 - 22	geography post test
23 - 24	history post test
25 - 26	philosophy post test
27 - 28	political economy post test
29 - 30	Freshman English 101A post test
31 - 32	Freshman English 101B post test

Appendix 7.12 The pilot Control Group

1 031 10 12 09 13 13 43 40 00 05 07 07 10 42 40
1 032 11 17 08 13 10 46 40 05 08 08 09 12 38 39
1 033 09 20 06 09 09 38 25 00 04 10 10 05 29 32
1 034 07 17 06 13 04 39 00 07 01 08 06 08 29 37
1 035 06 13 07 09 10 42 36 04 06 07 09 07 44 36
1 036 08 17 06 10 10 48 34 00 12 11 13 09 36 38
1 037 05 12 04 08 01 38 30 09 09 06 04 08 29 36
1 038 00 08 02 12 04 31 11 08 02 02 06 06 00 35
1 039 09 09 00 12 03 36 13 08 04 07 05 06 00 34
1 040 10 17 07 12 16 54 47 12 10 08 09 15 00 45
1 041 07 07 05 11 09 34 33 06 05 07 07 08 33 32
1 042 10 16 08 08 12 48 44 08 11 12 08 05 00 44
1 043 00 09 07 10 05 00 25 08 07 08 05 08 33 30
1 044 07 10 04 12 12 45 00 09 09 09 07 05 00 38
1 045 08 13 06 13 11 42 41 06 08 08 08 08 45 40
1 046 03 07 04 10 05 22 15 00 05 02 06 05 23 29
1 047 00 06 04 06 02 26 20 09 09 08 04 04 31 32
1 048 12 12 09 12 09 50 45 12 10 13 08 09 46 46
1 049 04 09 04 07 03 29 15 06 04 05 05 02 33 25
1 050 06 06 03 10 04 16 14 06 01 03 04 03 20 28
1 051 07 08 03 09 06 28 14 05 05 09 05 01 27 27
1 052 00 13 09 09 05 00 37 06 08 08 08 07 39 36
1 053 06 15 00 11 07 41 00 03 01 05 07 08 20 37
1 054 11 14 10 13 06 47 38 11 13 12 10 11 35 42
1 055 08 13 11 09 08 43 32 10 10 10 08 08 00 38
1 088 00 09 00 07 10 38 34 06 02 00 00 00 35 36
1 089 09 12 00 07 00 33 22 06 10 05 08 03 32 29
1 090 10 00 00 09 05 22 16 11 00 00 00 00 13 17
1 091 08 12 07 06 00 36 33 08 02 03 05 05 27 25
1 092 00 08 02 10 09 33 24 04 00 00 00 00 32 27
1 093 10 00 00 13 03 43 36 04 05 05 02 05 25 27
1 094 09 14 13 00 00 49 00 06 04 09 07 01 40 39
1 095 00 14 01 10 06 39 36 09 06 06 07 09 45 38
1 096 05 10 01 00 10 25 32 06 01 00 11 01 39 31
1 097 00 13 05 09 11 42 40 07 06 00 04 01 41 38
1 098 07 02 00 09 08 33 31 06 02 04 08 06 37 33
1 099 11 00 04 10 08 31 29 07 00 00 00 00 35 29
1 100 09 15 01 09 05 38 18 06 06 07 03 02 33 16
1 101 06 09 00 08 07 43 33 08 04 02 05 03 36 32
1 102 11 08 00 10 06 48 35 11 07 11 06 11 43 40
1 103 00 15 03 10 13 45 40 06 10 08 09 06 47 45
1 104 05 00 00 10 08 19 20 04 05 03 01 04 18 36
1 105 12 12 09 10 10 41 43 12 07 07 05 03 50 40
1 106 00 13 00 07 13 31 33 07 04 08 03 00 34 28
1 107 11 12 10 12 10 46 44 11 08 10 09 11 49 41
1 108 10 06 00 12 09 43 39 07 08 06 10 00 40 34

1 109 13 18 11 13 13 51 41 11 07 08 07 12 50 43
1 110 09 17 00 07 01 38 40 10 12 09 08 04 37 43
1 111 03 02 00 09 10 26 22 07 05 04 03 00 22 23
1 112 08 10 00 10 07 27 16 07 01 08 00 00 31 25
1 113 08 02 00 13 05 34 30 05 05 08 07 00 33 30
1 114 00 00 00 10 05 00 21 07 07 05 04 00 37 37
1 115 00 00 00 11 06 00 27 06 11 04 08 04 35 31
1 116 00 00 00 00 00 00 46 13 11 09 09 08 55 46

See key above for the pilot study group

Appendix 7.21 The Study Group of the main study

0376 11132312221 11214222222121142233232223222244344332223432322222 04 00 00 00 05 03 07 05 20 20 47 2432222432442222223223333333322332323232 1111111 01
0779 31321113241 21312232415241354453321322332254332122523212222122 05 07 11 23 17 04 07 09 31 24 77 2152122321453242152351342423132412121213 2 1115151 01
0778 11121113111 11212223112241254122211223442254322122213112212112 09 06 07 22 18 05 08 09 38 21 83 1122221111443111234224434453222412221121 2 1111115 01
0317 22322113311 12444444444454332443433433443344433434443443434343434 02 03 05 12 05 03 09 07 32 16 39 1111111110552111111122121111111111111111 1151511 01
0575 11132112211 44212222111211454121311312222431122231213221212311 09 13 12 33 30 10 07 13 46 08 88 1232211223154222444242444434232412112131 1111151 01
0576 21121112211 11414212222111111111221212222221222122111122221111 07 04 02 07 05 03 02 04 16 13 50 1422222222241222224411111111111142221111 1 1115151 01
0380 21121212211 11222122214212155122222222444444444442222222211111 04 06 10 29 26 09 09 07 41 33 75 2211111212444222121145544434221231112142 1 1111111 01
0785 11132[illegible]211 22013111312124142211211121211112222121144544211241 03 07 03 17 08 03 03 01 24 09 50 1011232221441221122232213222122124[illegible]211212 1551555 01
0577 22122112121 12312424313222145521321243512523141121214312212231 06 03 05 11 03 04 09 06 09 15 52 1232221311032322113312244444322213312 3121 1111111 01
0780 21121113311 11212221222123144321112212242252222222222233121122 1 00 00 00 00 01 00 00 00 14 00 50 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 01
0381 21131112211 11212220211111144411221212221244122121221542111144 08 03 02 13 09 03 07 03 25 21 59 1422223431442213333323344223221343332 1122 1111151 01
0781 22121112211 11212312122121154221212233211324434322252434322213 07 05 07 12 08 05 11 07 33 27 79 2142221221544313323242442343241244422 1322 1151155 01
0382 22121112111 11212312123121154221212233211324434322052432322213 06 05 03 07 05 02 02 01 12 08 43 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 01
0782 22122113111 22312423321222145521321245522253141122212322222231 06 04 05 23 21 09 06 05 33 24 65 1231211311531222143312244444221451402 1141 1111111 01
0783 22122113211 22112412211221144211222212114242222222112142121111 1 08 00 00 00 00 00 04 06 31 17 68 1131111331333131111311333331111331111111 1111151 01
0785 31131123111 22351222223235355323223332232135544422111412111233 3 09 02 03 19 05 05 03 05 23 13 47 2233322132343333222223333333311123201111 1 1011511 01
0379 21121132211 22214422215122244212222434212223432222123532221421 05 05 05 12 08 03 01 01 13 00 48 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 01
0579 21121312211 11212222221221245331222222332222121112412112222123 07 06 03 45 31 08 10 10 46 31 88 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 01
0578 32132112311 11421122222222242222222211222244222222314222422242 07 06 02 10 05 04 04 02 12 12 51 1012322231311224211312144423323141223122 2 1151151 01
0383 21121112221 22221124453144112321340444121332232111414154111111 04 03 10 15 22 05 05 08 32 21 77 1131212111221121222221211221222412221121 2 1111111 01
0787 21121313211 22133212122422155221112242222122111121212242211242 06 07 07 26 22 08 10 09 41 26 74 3122211111554122132244444222122422221222 1 1111155 01
0580 21131212211 33242222222221214424242222244224212222421412212222 1 06 03 07 26 18 08 07 06 28 00 68 1242411225451522441412442242244124212222 1111111 01
0581 22421142211 51221323421153155542422212521143224441212222122234 06 03 05 11 12 03 00 00 18 00 54 1132111112543243231312345354411244431111 1 1151511 01
1012 31111313111 44144111111533154021431244444244222141211322211111 05 06 08 27 20 06 07 09 31 25 75 3344444445444334534343333443111111111111 1111111 01
0786 11121313111 11241011110221154011112112452445554552011221211121 04 06 07 20 18 07 04 09 43 24 76 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 01
0788 21321113311 31251131221114153111133113443353131221114111311223 09 12 10 27 21 07 05 10 36 27 81 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 01
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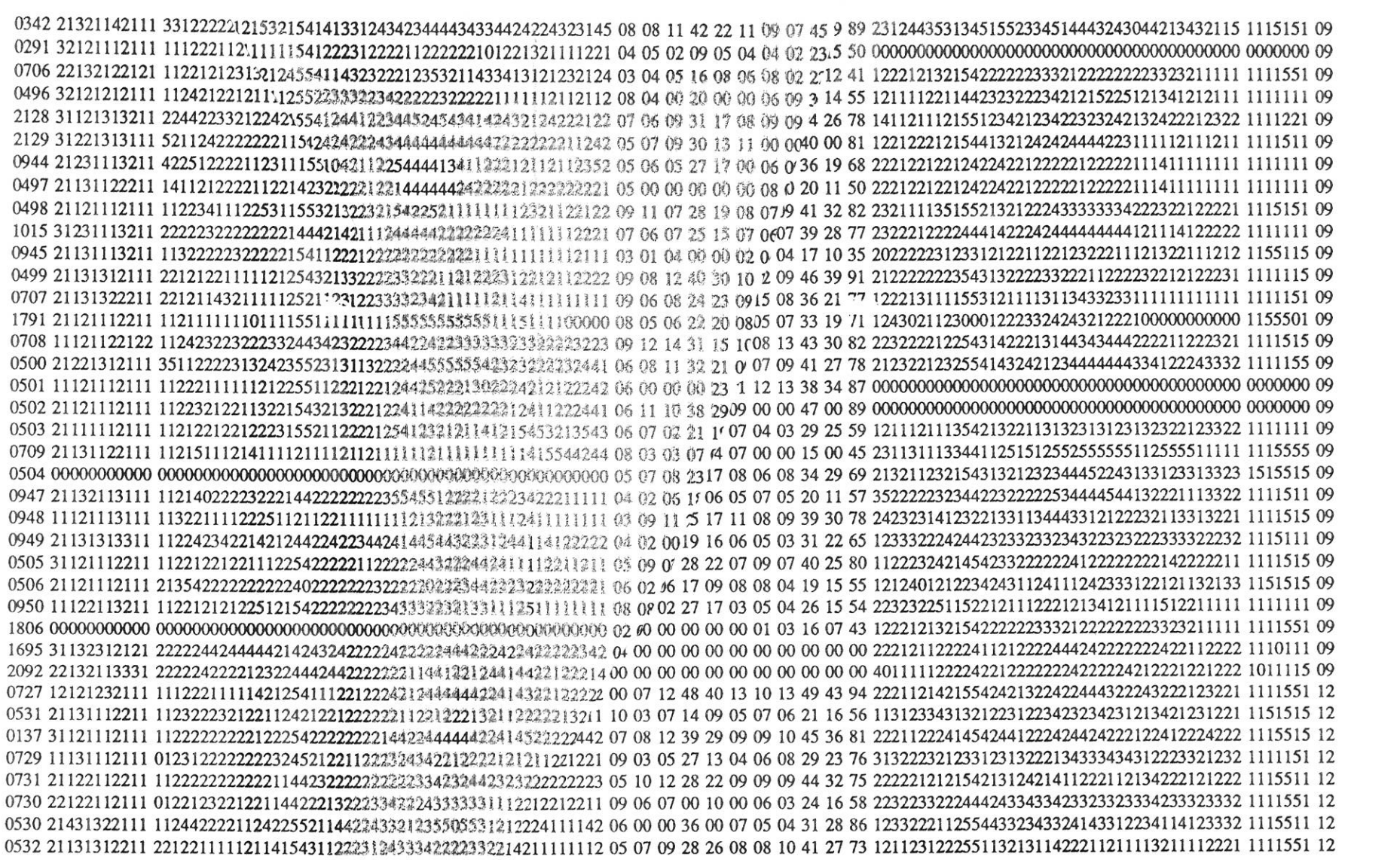

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Key

Column Description

1-4 id.
5 age (1 = 17 and below, 2 = 18 and 19, 3 = 20 and above)
6 sex (1 = male, 2 = female)
7 mother tongue (1=Amharic, 2=Oromigna, 3=Tigrigna, 4=others, 5=non-Ethiopian.
8 family background (SES)(1=rich, 2=middle, 3=poor)
9 school location (1=urban, 2=rural)
10 school type (1=academic, 2=vocational, 3=comprehensive)
11 school nature (1=government, 2=public, 3=private, 4=mission, 5=others)
12 ESLCE (1 = 4, 2 = 3.4-3.8, 3 = 2.6-3.2, 4 = 2-2.4)
13 English result (ESLCE) (1 = 4, 2 = 3, 3 = 2, 4 = 1, 5 = 0)
14 Preferred placement (1 = social science, 2 = science, 3 = agriculture, 4 = medicine, 5 = others
15 Pleased with current placement (1 = yes, 2 = no)

Pretest

16 confidence in reading in first language (from this number up to 65, the responses follow the following pattern: 1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3=no idea, 4=disagree, and 5=strongly disagree)
17 confidence in reading in Amharic
18 confidence in reading in English

19 study or exam as a purpose for reading
20 entertainment as a purpose for reading

Confidence in one's ability to read

21 predicting what will come next in the text
22 seeing differences between main points and supporting detailed
23 relating information and seeing relationships within the given text
24 text evaluation or evaluating the writer's point of view
25 use prior knowledge to understand text
26 saying when one understands something or not

Reading repair strategies

27 keep on reading and hope for clarification later
28 reading the problematic part again
29 rereading
30 looking up for meanings of words
31 stopping reading if text is difficult
32 looking for help from teachers

Effective reading strategies

33 mentally sounding out parts of words
34 understanding the meaning of each word
35 getting the overall meaning of text
36 pronouncing each whole word
37 focusing on grammatical structures
38 relating text to prior knowledge
39 looking up words in the dictionary
40 focusing on details of the content
41 focusing on the organisation of text

Sources of reading difficulty

42 sounds of individual words
43 pronunciation of words
44 recognizing words
45 grammatical structures
46 the alphabet
47 using background knowledge to understand text
48 getting the overall meaning of text

49 organisation of text
50 extracting important points to summarise
51 skimming and scanning
52 transcoding information

The best reader
53 recognise words
54 sound out words
55 understanding overall meaning
56 use a dictionary
57 guess at word meanings
58 use of prior knowledge to integrate information
59 focus on details of content
60 grasp the organisation of text

Learning to become a fluent reader
61 learn vocabulary
62 pronunciation
63 learn to read by oneself
64 take the responsibility for learning
65 the teacher teaches very well

Pretest package
66-7 reading comprehension test (out of 15)
68-9 geography cloze test (out of 25)
70-1 history cloze test (out of 25)
72-3 Freshman English 101A (out of 55)
74-5 Freshman English 101B (out of 50)

Post test package
76-7 reading comprehension test (out of 15)
78-9 geography cloze test (out of 25)
80-1 history cloze test (out of 25)
82-3 Freshman English 101A (out of 55)
84-5 Freshman English 101B (out of 50)
86-7 Freshman English 101A first semester examination result (100)

Post test

88 study or exam as purpose for reading (from this number to number 128, please follow the pattern described in 16 above)
89 entertainment as a purpose for reading

Confidence in one's ability in
90 predicting what will come next in the text
91 identifying between main points and supporting details
92 relating information to previous part of text
93 evaluating author's point of view
94 using background knowledge

Reading repair strategies
95 proceeding with reading and hope for clarification further on
96 reading the problematic part again
97 rereading
98 stopping reading if text is difficult
99 depend on teachers for help

Effective reading strategies
100 understanding the meaning of each word
101 getting the overall meaning of a text
102 pronunciation

103 grammatical structures
104 relating text to what is already known
105 looking up words in a dictionary
106 details of content
107 organisation of text

Sources of reading difficulty
108 pronunciation of words
109 recognising words
110 grammatical structures
111 relating text to background knowledge
112 getting the overall meaning of text
113 organisation of text
114 extracting important points to summarise
115 skimming and scanning
116 transcoding information

The best reader
117 recognising words
118 pronunciation
119 dictionary use
120 guessing meaning of words
121 relate information in text with prior knowledge
122 focus on details of content
123 grasp text organisation

The best reader
124 learn many words
125 improving pronunciation
126 the teacher teaches well
127 learn grammar
128 read as many books as possible

Responses to questions on the programme followed for one semester

129 enjoy the programme (the following follow this pattern 1= yes, 5= no)
130 liked the reading materials
131 helped me in learning Freshman English 101A
132 helped me in learning other courses
133 more time to independent reading in the lab
134 more time to discussion sessions
135 the same arrangement for the coming semester

136-7 section number

The above data does not include group number; it should have indicated that the study group is labelled as 01. The control group (whose data is submitted below) indicates that the group's number shown on the last column is 02.

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0963 31121313111 11222323212221155211112122123212112122211222211111 00 00 00 36 00 08 00 00 41 00 91 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 11 2
0973 31121142111 11233222113234155124222132223443444322152214222214 00 06 13 42 35 00 00 00 53 00 89 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 11 2
0530 31331112111 32212232322312411321223332311432343323234333122222 00 06 07 18 16 00 00 00 34 00 70 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 11 2
0528 31131122111 00120020000000002000010000000100000001000000000010 00 02 01 19 07 05 00 00 16 00 44 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 11 2
1769 31131113311 11221211112221152212224312343453344441212211111112 06 08 05 22 13 00 08 09 20 30 67 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 13 2
0748 31132112111 11221312333221254232322333444243232322343222312343 09 04 11 37 34 09 07 02 39 32 82 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 13 2
0999 21331313111 21244224222221152222111212224334242221221211211121 02 05 07 17 10 05 00 00 29 00 40 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 13 2
1000 21131313311 11241222222222125422222222222225521155222432222222 1 06 00 00 26 20 08 00 00 35 00 55 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 13 2
0749 21121112223 11222112211221243221322322332243122221123222222212 10 00 00 00 34 09 08 05 48 32 82 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 13 2
0546 21121312211 11224223222214245232213243321223243222422441222222 00 04 04 27 00 04 06 08 30 16 54 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 13 2
0547 21131112211 11212222221221141222212112222212222222221222211221 07 04 06 18 04 04 07 06 26 18 45 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 13 2
0548 31221312111 21112221121211145141422245443452201122214114222121 06 11 10 42 39 09 00 00 48 00 81 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 13 2
2299 21321113211 11111111111112144141522111242444424142212121114212 00 00 00 00 00 00 05 08 00 23 74 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 13 2

0352 31121112111 1122222222222224423233222233333322222221322122212205 05 11 27 00 00 00 00 32 00 84 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 13 2
0550 31121112111 4424422232224224432233222422224242244222242222222310 00 00 00 35 11 09 08 43 25 74 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 13 2
0750 21121122111 2212211122312125522212221122214122142221242212211104 06 03 24 07 03 00 00 25 00 51 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 13 2
1003 21222123151 4222222322224222442322222223234443332323242222223211 05 06 14 07 08 00 00 00 00 30 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 13 2
1004 11131113111 1122211211111225432232423442252232222214222222222210 09 09 33 34 00 11 12 43 30 84 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 13 2
0552 21231312111 2224222422212115221221111222433424222121211111111107 05 06 35 30 09 10 10 00 33 84 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 13 2
0553 11122112111 1122222222222215422122122244434442434121352222124200 04 08 22 16 00 04 06 47 23 69 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 13 2
1763 31131314311 2221222222221124122222222221114222222211222122222220 06 03 05 18 06 00 03 04 21 14 38 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 13 2
1005 21431313221 3122322121221114423332222233224434222132232222222108 00 00 00 24 07 07 09 39 24 77 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 13 2
1006 12121133111 1122131111112115113112233241143433331111112212111108 12 08 39 34 13 06 10 48 37 89 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 13 2
1018 31131313111 1121122221121225534122132244344443433221311212221208 08 14 40 00 00 00 00 52 00 37 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 13 2
1007 21121313212 2224232332332222332222223222222233222322212333223220 07 02 03 14 00 00 07 04 19 21 77 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 13 2
1010 12131113111 1123122222322124404143232232244433322431421113312200 06 03 34 28 08 00 00 00 00 51 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 13 2
0752 22121112111 2241322332243223234242331344224323133342333233322304 05 01 24 03 09 00 00 13 00 88 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 13 2
1008 11121113111 2232223322222124523222344444334222444252211312322308 08 11 39 42 11 07 07 48 36 72 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 13 2
0556 31132112211 1132332222222225423242222431234444443141221122233107 04 06 27 00 00 00 00 41 00 73 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 13 2
0557 31331122111 2122222133322323333232232302322322222234323223310 00 05 04 23 13 06 00 00 00 00 31 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 13 2
1009 21132123111 1121221212324223342332222223334444432323422222323209 02 02 02 18 09 09 00 00 20 00 32 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 13 2
0753 22121312111 2241322332243223234242331344224323133342333233322309 09 04 00 26 04 07 00 00 27 00 55 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 13 2
0558 11431122211 0002022131112114422231212232114222133122152131244108 08 04 09 27 24 06 00 00 37 00 82 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 13 2
0559 22111142311 1113221331123125552121322344245555511122252111212208 00 07 08 41 00 00 00 00 00 00 75 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 13 2
1011 31132013211 1122222222212215422211121132224222422212142222222105 05 06 10 31 31 00 09 08 38 34 74 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 13 2
1001 11331123211 0002121212344125521244221113222211133241252112324206 03 04 00 03 00 03 02 08 15 53 0000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000 0000000 13 2

see key above

Appendix 7.3 Freshman English test results of the main study (both groups)

Freshman English 101A									Freshman English 101B								Freshman English 101A				
row scores	pretest results				post test results				row scores	pretest results				post test results				first semester final				
	study		control		study		control			study		control		study		control		row scores	study		control	
	no	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%		no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%		no.	%	no.	%
3	0	0	0		0		0	0	3	5	3	5	3	0		0	0	30	0		1	
6	1		1		0		0	0	6	17	10	14	8	1		0	0	33	1		3	2
9	6	3	6	3	1		1		9	22	13	19	10	9	5	5	4	36	1		1	
12	15	8	7	4	5	2	1		12	8	5	27	15	15	8	8	6	39	3	1	4	2
15	6	3	14	7	6	3	3	2	15	9	5	12	7	20	11	18	14	42	4	2	7	4
18	17	9	23	12	7	3	7	5	18	19	11	17	9	19	10	11	9	45	6	3	8	5
21	22	12	15	8	14	7	14	11	21	16	9	11	6	19	10	13	10	48	10	5	8	5
24	17	9	28	15	14	7	7	5	24	14	8	14	8	18	10	12	10	51	14	7	14	8
27	22	12	29	15	17	8	13	10	27	12	7	18	10	18	10	20	16	54	11	5	6	3
30	22	12	24	13	11	5	8	6	30	21	12	14	8	18	10	11	9	57	12	6	9	5
33	19	10	9	5	19	9	12	9	33	6	3	15	8	20	11	11	9	60	7	3	11	6
36	8	4	8	4	25	12	10	8	36	8	5	10	5	12	7	12	10	63	10	5	7	4
39	9	5	12	6	25	12	16	12	39	9	5	2	1	9	5	4	3	66	10	5	12	7
42	9	5	7	4	19	9	12	9	42	8	5	4	2	2	1	0	0	69	10	5	12	7
45	7	4	3	2	17	8	12	9	45	1		0		2	1	0	0	72	3	1	10	6

48	5	3	1		15	7	9	7	48	0		0		0		0	0	75	22	11	13	7
51	1		1		7	3	1		51	0		0		0		0	0	78	20	10	13	7
54	0		0		1		3	2										81	22	11	11	6
57	0		0		0		0	0										84	13	6	14	8
																		87	7	3	4	2
																		90	12	6	5	3
																		93	6	3	0	0
																		96	3	1	0	0
number	186		188		203		129		175		182		125						207		175	
average	25.9		24.8		32.87		32.4		20.4		19.1		22.9						68		64	
																		99	0		0	0

*Table 7.3 **Freshman English 101A and Freshman English 101B** test results*