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A Case Study on Two Korean EFL Middle
School Students' Oral Reading Experiences

한국 EFL 중학생 두 명의 소리 내어
읽기 경험에 대한 사례 연구

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# A Case Study on Two Korean EFL Middle School Students' Oral Reading Experiences

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# A Case Study on Two Korean EFL Middle School Students' Oral Reading Experiences

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# ABSTRACT

Oral reading (henceforth, OR) has long been used as an effective instructional tool in the L1 context. Especially, it has been reported that less-skilled or beginning readers benefit from OR intervention (Fancher, 2007; Dickens & Meisinger, 2016; Hale et al., 2007; Kragler, 1995; Miller & Smith, 1985; NICHD, 2010; Prior et al., 2011). However, L2 reading researchers have shown relatively less interest in investigating the use of OR for promoting L2 learners' reading abilities. Therefore, the present study aimed to investigate how Korean EFL middle school students, especially with lower-intermediate proficiency of English, experience OR instruction, and to examine how they develop their reading skills, especially in terms of reading rate, accuracy, and comprehension.

Two male Korean EFL middle school students participated in the present study. They practiced OR with the instructor on a one-to-one basis for 14 weeks, and their development in reading rate, accuracy, and comprehension was measured. Plus, in-depth exploration in their perceptions and opinions towards OR experience was conducted. The whole process was transcribed verbatim and analyzed in a qualitative approach. The findings of the present study are followed.

First, OR enabled an in-depth diagnosis of the participants' various reading problems. Their less-skilled decoding skills and chunking problems were observed, and word calling phenomenon occurred in the case of one participant. Yet the role of the instructor was essential for them to notice those problems and endeavor at improvements. Second, OR practice was a useful instructional method to solve

many of the above problems. The participants' phonological awareness strengthened, their reading rate increased, and appropriate phrasing was promoted. In the process of focusing on correcting many problems, however, meaning had to be prioritized in order not to turn the experience into mere recitation. Lastly, OR helped to build the participants' confidence in reading, and to arouse interest in reading activity by monitoring their own performance and witnessing the progress over time.

Although the present study was limited in terms of sample size, and other methodological issues, it still provides valuable insights on various issues related to Korean EFL learners' reading development. Based on the findings, regular implements of OR in current classrooms are recommended. The results of the study may contribute to an understanding of the OR intervention in second language learning. Practical suggestions for pedagogy and future research were also identified.

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# CHAPTER 1.
# INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the research by presenting the motivation of the study and the organization of the thesis. Section 1.1 discusses the motivation and purpose of the present study, and Section 1.2 reveals the research questions. The chapter closes with an outline of the organization of the thesis in Section 1.3.

## 1.1. The Motivation and Purpose of the Study

In his seminal work on fluency instruction through oral reading (henceforth, OR), Rasinski (2010) briefly summarizes how the status of OR in school has changed historically in the United States. According to him, OR had been a dominant instructional tool in the nineteenth century, but entering the twentieth century, education scholars of the time began to argue that more emphasis be on silent reading. Such a claim is based on their views that OR practice is ineffective for improving comprehension and above all that it is silent reading that plays a prominent role in reading throughout students' lives. However, Rasinski (2010) disputes the ideas, claiming that not only does OR contribute to the transition to silent reading but it is also a recognized part of reading employed regularly in everyday life.

In fact, numerous researchers have found OR an effective reading strategy in the first language (L1) context, based on the facts that during OR more attention is

paid to printed letters (Miller & Smith, 1985) and multiple sensory modalities are involved (Elgart, 1978; Rasinski, 2010; Swalm, 1973). Especially there has been considerable agreement about the effectiveness of OR for younger or less-skilled readers (Fancher, 2007; Dickens & Meisinger, 2016; Hale et al., 2007; Kragler, 1995; Miller & Smith, 1985; NICHD, 2010; Prior, Fenwick, Saunders, Ouellette, O'Quinn, & Harvey, 2011). For example, Kragler (1995) found that mumble reading was a significant prerequisite for younger learners to become a fluent reader in the future. Other researchers such as Rasinski and Nageldinger (2016) and Zutell, Donelson, Bevans, and Todt (2006) reported the usefulness of OR instruction for struggling reader in the clinical settings.

It has been well acknowledged that reading in a second language (L2) is different from reading in L1 in many ways. Grabe (2009) and Grabe and Stoller (2013) illustrate three major types of differences between L1 and L2 reading: linguistic and processing differences, individual and experiential differences, and sociocultural and institutional differences. Among these, linguistic and processing differences mainly refer to different orthography between L1 and L2, and differing amounts of vocabulary, grammar, and discourse knowledge between L1 and L2 readers. The former often brings L2 learners hard times figuring out letter-sound relationships of L2 (p. 41), and the latter usually results from limited amounts of exposure to L2, which is one of the 'individual and experiential differences' (p. 50).

Accordingly, many second language education researchers put extra emphasis on OR practice. L2 readers are naturally slower in word recognition processes

than L1 readers, who developed greater automaticity through frequent exposure to print and much practice (Taguchi, 2012). For fluent reading, one needs to first make accurate connections between graphemes and phonemes (Stanovich, 1991), and Gibson (2008) states that it is OR practice that greatly contributes to readers' improving word recognition skills. Also, if fluent reading allows for faster word recognition, a reader's cognitive capacities are available for comprehension of the text (Rasinski, 2010). Moreover, Rasinski (2010) and Rasinski and Nageldinger (2016) point out that OR promotes reading in phrases─that is, chunking by units of meaning, which ultimately contributes to understanding of the contents. OR is likely to be a useful learning tool especially in EFL context, where printed language input is limited and there are fewer opportunities for sufficiently practicing basic skills of reading.

Recently, a number of researchers have shown interests on the use of OR in L2 classrooms, from elementary school (Jeon, 2014; Kim, 2012; Yoon, 2016) to college (Jeon, 2012; Jiang, 2015; Moon, 2015; Yu, 2015). Pre- and post-tests of these studies usually reported the participants' improvements in reading comprehension (Jeon, 2012; Kim, 2012; Moon, 2015; Yoon, 2016; Yu, 2015) along with the increases in motivation (Jeon, 2012; Kim, 2012). Some studies witnessed improved reading rate (Jeon, 2012; Kim, 2012) and accuracy (Kim, 2012). However, there is a lack of research on how OR can be employed for individual learners who have difficulty in reading, which has been much implemented in the L1 context. Besides, there is a paucity of research that investigated the effects of OR on L2 secondary school students. Furthermore,

there is need for an in-depth analysis of learners' experience when practicing OR, such as what difficulties they have or what benefits they gain, and of immediate responses and perceptions of learners at the time of activity.

The current study involved two Korean EFL middle school students whose English proficiency was lower-intermediate level. During the total of sixteen sessions, the participants practiced OR with story books, and reported their thoughts on the experiences through interviews. The instructor—here, the researcher—provided modeling, and assigned regular homework which was reviewed in the next session. In addition, the instructor assessed the participants' reading development on a sessional basis, focusing on reading rate, accuracy, and comprehension. Although the present study includes the instructor's OR as well, main focus is more on students' OR practice. This study attempted to see if OR practice is helpful in improving the participants' reading abilities, and most of all aimed at closely inspecting individual student's OR experiences with qualitative approach. Since little assumption is prescribed in this study, analysis and discussion will take on more explorative nature. It is expected that the present study could contribute to reminding both students and teachers of the significant role of OR in promoting reading skills and of the possibilities of employing it either in classrooms or as individual practice. Plus, it is hoped to be able to shed insight on how to approach OR instruction and what considerations to bear in mind during the implementation, especially with Korean EFL middle school students.

## 1.2. Research Questions

This study investigates multifaceted aspects of two Korean EFL middle school students' OR experience; it is guided by the following exploratory research questions:

1. How do the two Korean EFL middle school students experience OR practice?

2. How do the two Korean EFL middle school students develop their reading skills through OR in terms of reading rate, accuracy, and comprehension?

## 1.3. Organization of the Thesis

This thesis consists of seven chapters. Following the present introduction chapter, Chapter 2 provides a review of the literature on OR practice that helped to form the research questions of the present study. Chapter 3 describes the research methods, including participants, materials, procedures of the experiment, and analysis of the data. Chapter 4-5 reports the results of the 16-session experiment with each participant, and discusses the central issues exploring the research questions. Chapter 6 discusses significant issues that arose based on the results of the experiment. Chapter 7 summarizes major findings of the study and concludes with pedagogical implications, limitations, and suggestions for future research.

# CHAPTER 2.
# LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, literature is reviewed on the related topics of the current study. Section 2.1 illustrates widespread uses of OR practice in the L1 context as both an instructional and diagnostic tool. Section 2.2 reviews research on OR practice in the L2 context. Lastly, Section 2.3 discusses the limitations of previous studies and reveals the research questions that guided the present study.

## 2.1. OR as both an Instructional and a Diagnostic Tool in the L1 Context

This section comprises of two parts. In the first subsection, the aspects in which OR instruction could contribute to learners' reading development are discussed, and then specific uses of it with less-skilled or beginning readers are reviewed. Section 2.1.2 explains how OR has been used as a diagnostic tool for learners' reading development, with a focus on three components; rate, accuracy, and comprehension.

## 2.1.1. OR as an Instructional Tool

This subsection discusses how OR has been used as an instructional tool in the L1 context. Section 2.1.1.1 first introduces the benefits of OR practice that have been reported by reading researchers. Section 2.1.1.2 reports the use of OR practice with struggling readers.

## 2.1.1.1. The Benefits of OR Practice

OR has remained an important instructional tool in reading education. Practicing reading has been implemented in classrooms in a variety of ways, and the famous round robin reading was born as word learning began to be focused in students' reading (Hoffman, 1987). Round robin reading, the long-standing method favored by many teachers, requires students one by one to read orally while the teacher assesses students' ability to decode words. According to Rasinski (2010), despite criticisms on its effectiveness, round robin reading is still an "embedded and ubiquitous part of classroom culture in the United States" (p. 22). Over time, fluency instruction has emerged as an alternative form of OR instruction, which is being spotlighted as the subject of numerous studies.

Hoffman (1987) suggested some key components for creating the design of OR instruction for slow readers. Having gone through a number of adjustments, the procedure evolved to include two main components: direct instruction and indirect instruction. The former includes three subroutines. First, the teacher

introduces the story and constructs a story map with students. In the second subroutine, the students practice with the teacher's assistance. The teacher provides modeling, discusses pitch, stress, and juncture with the students. Lastly, the students practice alone, and then perform OR in front of other students. Indirect instruction, the mastery phase, was added as a result of reflecting the needs of students to become 'experts' on a story. In fact, most features in the above design (i.e. use of stories, repeated oral practice on the same text, teacher's modeling, and focus on rate, accuracy, and good expression) were pointed out as common features of effective OR instruction in earlier studies (p. 370).

Regarding the benefits of OR, a comprehensive review can be found in Rasinski's (2010) work, *The Fluent Reader*. According to him, four major areas stand out when it comes to the benefits of OR on students' reading development. First, OR could strengthen learners' decoding skills. It has been widely accepted that reading comprehension is facilitated by several component skills, which are categorized into lower-level processes and higher-level processes. Decoding serves as a lower-level processing for reading. According to Murray (2016), it means having a clear understanding of the alphabetical principle and letter-sound correspondences, and the ability to apply that knowledge. Therefore, it can be said that skillful decoding fosters accurate and automatic word recognition. Skilled readers cannot help but recognize the words once they see them, while it is the very part where poor readers have hard time, not being able to master the skills of rapidly or automatically recognizing the word. OR helps students to improve decoding skills, by making them examine the words carefully and "sound them

out accurately" (Rasinski, 2010, p. 29).

Meanwhile, it is important to note that as Kuhn (2004) underlines, improvements of word recognition skills require "the extensive reading of connected text" (p. 338). In other words, practicing reading of isolated words is not enough to lead to automatic word recognition. Several paragraphs of reading or more should be processed for effective word recognition practice.

Secondly, fluency should be noted here. Fluency has been regarded as one of the most primary goals to be achieved in learning to read, thus being the focus on the newly emerging approach, "fluency instruction." Fluency by definition refers to "the ability to read rapidly with ease and accuracy, and to read with appropriate expression and phrasing" (Grabe, 2009, p. 291). Rasinski (2010), an ardent advocate of fluency instruction, even claims that fluency is the "answer . . . to many reading problems," if not every problem (p. 31). Undoubtedly, consistent OR practice is likely to help develop fluency, ensuring the success in rapid and automatic processing of words, sometimes with exhibition of prosodic features. Often called the "bridge between word recognition and reading comprehension" (Pikulski, 2006, p.), fluency in turn unburdens the readers' cognitive capacities for decoding and text chunking, so the reader can devote more attention to comprehension, the ultimate purpose of the act of reading (Rasinski, 2010, p. 42).

Especially, appropriate phrasing is known to be an important element of fluent reading, highly related to building comprehension. As Casteel (1988) notes, appropriate chunking prevents word-by-word reading, which in turn contributes to comprehension. Pauses, whether short or long, should be the time when students

take time to process what they have read and to make the meaning clearer. Many other researchers have noted the effects of the instruction of appropriate phrasing on reading comprehension (Rasinski, 2010; Rasinski & Nageldinger, 2016; Samuels, 2002).

Comprehension is the goal of most reading activities. There may be some differences in the extent, but reading is fundamentally aimed at grasping the central messages or meaning underlying the text. Undoubtedly, fluent reading requires the reader to attend to meaning. Merely reading with smoothness and sufficient speed is meaningless in itself but for understanding the content. Therefore, there has been a growing consensus that comprehension must be also considered in measuring fluency, emphasizing a close relationship between fluency and comprehension (Fuchs, Fuchs, Hosp, & Jenkins, 2001; Jenkins, Fuchks, Van Den Broek, Espin, & Deno, 2003).

As noted above, OR can contribute to better comprehension of the text, because fluent reading includes assigning pauses appropriately and chunking the phrases into meaningful units. In addition, OR accompanies multisensory processing of words; that is to say, during OR the reader sees, pronounces, and hears the words. Therefore, the words are likely to become more memorable, more deeply impressed in one's mind. Duncan (2014) described this process with the incisive statement that by OR, readers "unpick the meaning as if for others, and hearing and understanding it as if from others" (p. 88).

Last but not least, the impacts of OR on affective aspects should be discussed. Rasinski (2010) argues that not only is OR a fun, engaging, and authentic activity,

but also that it builds confidence and creates community if done with pairs or in groups. Expressive and meaning-based reading can be motivational for students, and unlike silent reading it can appeal to students who think that reading is boring. Timid students often become confident and successful in reading through OR practice. Rasinski describes this phenomenon in the following inspirational sentence: "Oral reading is the vehicle that allows them to find their voices" (p. 28). Hurst, Scales, Frecks, and Lewis (2011) suggest one practical application of oral rendition of practiced texts in classroom for reluctant readers. Taking an example of one student's experience, they expand the way of experimenting OR from individual practice to performance-based experience. If students are ensured of selection of texts, plenty of preparation time and extra assistance of the instructor, an opportunity of OR in front of the class can greatly increase previously demotivated students' self-confidence and interests in reading. This type of performance reading is one of the various forms of shared OR practice suggested by Rasinski (2010). Reading aloud in front of the class or the instructor not only becomes the confidence-building opportunity, but it connects the reader with the listeners, therefore creating "community" (p. 28). The audience pays attention to the reader's voice, and also the meaning of the text. The reader becomes conscious of the listeners and reading is not the reader's own act any more, but represents shared experience with the other people. Assisted reading, which includes choral reading, paired reading, or buddy reading, can be another viable option, even though these options might include only two people.

Reviewed so far were the reasons behind the claim that OR practice can be

advantageous in learning to read in L1. The next section discusses on how OR instruction has been particularly emphasized and administered with less-skilled or beginning readers. Building lower-level processing skills and providing experiences of success in reading seem to be the keys to assist learners who have difficulty in reading.

## 2.1.1.2. OR Instruction for Less-skilled or Beginning Readers

Rasinski and Nageldinger (2016) discuss a specialized reading program for struggling readers and its administration with numerous students who have difficulty in reading. Their program includes such essential elements as modeling, assisted reading, and students' repeated practicing. This procedure with special focus on scaffolded instruction for mastery of a given text is believed to provide the participants with experience of success in reading, and the Kent State University (KSU) reading clinic reports significant gains through recent studies.

Zutell et al. (2012) are among those who see great potentials of OR instruction for struggling readers. According to them, struggling readers are greatly slow and laborious readers, and read the text "in a word-by-word manner, with little sense of meaningful language" (p. 311). Although OR practice was embedded in a larger program that includes other types of literacy instruction, Zutell et al.'s (2012) study in the Ohio State University (OSU) reading clinic reassures the status of OR practice as an essential activity for the interventions with less-skilled readers, especially in terms of fluency.

In a similar vein, OR practice has been of growing importance for beginning readers. For example, Prior and Welling (2001) conducted an experiment in which seventy-three students from 2nd to 4th grade were asked to read twice, orally and silently. The results revealed that there was no difference in reading comprehension for 2nd grade students between the two modes of reading, whereas 3rd and 4th grade students comprehended better when they read the text orally. The researchers originally predicted that 2nd and 3rd grade students would read better orally and 4th grade students better silently, but as evidenced the results were not consistent with their prediction. They concluded that their initial assumption that the transition from oral to silent reading would be completed as early as at about 4th grade was incorrect. About a decade later, a replication study was conducted, and this time it included subjects from broader grade ranges. In this study, Prior et al. (2011) revealed that a developmental transition actually exists. This time the experiment included 1st to 7th graders. It was found that 1st to 5th graders scored higher for reading comprehension after reading orally, 6th grade students showed no difference between the two modes of reading, and those from the 7th grade comprehended better after reading silently. This study further supported the premise that younger students benefit from OR and as they grow competent in that mode of reading, the transition to silent reading occurs and they can read the text without any sounds made, entailing comprehension.

The above phenomenon is explained by drawing upon Vygotsky's theory of the child's language development. Vygotsky (1978) argued that children speak language in the social realm, and over time speak to themselves, eventually being

able to think without speaking out loud (p. 57). He uses the term 'internalization' to explain this process of language development. According to him, this same procedure can be applied to a child's reading development. That is, a child begins to read a book aloud, whether that is a parents' suggestion or a choice of their own. Then, the child will reach the stage where they can read a book without making any sounds. Kragler (1995) found that learners who were allowed to mumble read at earlier ages eventually became better readers later than those who were not, and this mumble reading serves as the process of internalization that students went through to fully develop their reading skills.

Silent reading may be the ultimate goal and the most frequently used mode of reading for human's everyday life. However, numerous findings like the above ones seem to indicate that OR stage is essential for L1 reading development. Therefore, it might be important to wait until the transition occurs for beginning learners and to encourage as many OR practices as possible until then. On the contrary, for older students who have already experienced the transition to silent reading, forcing them to read aloud could be inefficient. There is mounting evidence supporting the importance of OR in early stages of reading development as can be seen in related studies (Fancher, 2007; Dickens & Meisinger, 2016; Hale et al., 2007; Miller & Smith, 1984). Likewise, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (2000) claims that for beginning learners reading silently only is not effective in developing fluency and other reading skills, emphasizing the importance of OR in early reading development.

## 2.1.2. OR as a Diagnostic Tool

OR offers the opportunity for students to monitor their reading processes. This is another aspect in which OR could be beneficial for learners. Rasinski (2010) highlights the fact that "oral reading allows us to view the reading process" (p. 43). Learners might discover some bad habits or repetitive errors that were or could not be identified during silent reading. This self-monitoring increases the awareness on the part of the reader, and provides opportunities to reflect on the process itself and make improvements. Assessments are fundamentally intended to help learners raise awareness on their learning, and employ various strategies for improvements, thus achieving empowerment and agency in their own learning (Brown & Lee, 2015). In this respect, OR is likely to be helpful also for students' developing self-regulation skills.

Needless to say, monitoring students' OR performance could support teaching as well. Reading, when conducted silently, is hard to evaluate since there is nothing to be observed or measured during the act of reading; no one knows what is happening inside a reader's brain. Surely reading assessment can be done in various forms of test after reading is finished. Standardized reading assessment task formats include cloze, multiple-choice, sentence completion, free recall, summary, etc. (Grabe, 2009, p. 359). However, this is not exactly the examination of the reading process. Therefore, OR becomes the "next best thing" for evaluation or monitoring (Rasinski, 2010, p. 43). Whether a focus is on word reading accuracy, the rate of reading, or anything else, students' OR activity can

allow teachers to examine what aspects the students are having difficulties with and thereby to determine the kinds of feedback or instructional methods that the teachers can provide for the students.

Regarding diagnosis of reading problems and corresponding correction, Morris (2013) demonstrated how to implement assessment through the examination of students' OR. Like Rasinski, he firmly believes that "a careful record of a child's OR is the best 'window' we can have into the developing reading process" (p. 40). He notes that in diagnosis of reading problems it is important to address questions on various aspects of successful reading. Among those, measures of the students' oral reading rate, accuracy, and comprehension were included as primary issues to deal with. Rasinski (2010) also asserted students' OR enables the teacher to analyze strengths and weaknesses in word recognition (accuracy) and fluency (rate) along with comprehension (p. 181). The next three sections discuss each component one by one.

## 2.1.2.1. Reading Rate

Reading rate is one of the most salient features that can be measured through OR. Adams (1990) noted that reading rate is the most significant characteristic of skillful reading. In fact, oral reading rate has been acknowledged by many education researchers as a valid measure of monitoring student reading development (Fuchs et al., 2001; Grabe, 2009; Hudson, Lane, & Pullen, 2005; Morris, 2013). The reasons why oral reading rate is important could be

enlightened by automaticity theory. In their theory of automatic information processing in reading, LaBerge and Samuels (1974) argued that automatizing word processing is the key to successful reading, since thereby more attention can be devoted to comprehending the text (p. 293). They viewed reading acquisition as a series of skills, and contended that success depends on making this processing of several skills take less time (p. 318).

However, one thing should be noted here. Morris (2013) cautions that measuring reading rate might give students the wrong impression that reading speed or rate is more important than comprehension, thus leading them to be neglectful of meaning. Due to this issue, many scholars have questioned the appropriacy of the measurement of reading rate (Alt & Samuels, 2011; Godman, 2006; Valencia et al., 2010). Therefore, as Morris subsequently noted, reading rate should be measured in a reading-for-meaning context, and if it is done right, it could become valuable information for examining students' reading skills.

## 2.1.2.2. Reading Accuracy

To reiterate LaBerge and Samuels's (1974) automaticity theory, learning a series of processing stages involving visual, phonological systems requires one to achieve accuracy first before moving on to the next stage, automaticity (p. 319). At the accuracy stage, students figure out the association between the visual letters and their sounds. After all, students cannot achieve automaticity unless they have become familiar with letter-sound correspondences. Rasinski (2010) also

emphasizes that a certain level of accuracy in decoding words is required to be successful in reading. Especially, as he notes, identifying patterns of word recognition errors is likely to provide a more detailed picture of the students' word recognition development (p. 187).

### 2.1.2.3. Reading Comprehension

Comprehension, commonly regarded as the ultimate goal of reading, is one of the most frequently measured areas to assess learners' reading abilities. As noted previously, OR without any attention to meaning can be problematic. In fact, Rowell (1976) noted that OR leads people to focus so much on pronunciation or intonation that they cannot concentrate on the contents of the text. Likewise, Franklin, Mooneyham, Baird, and Schooler (2014) examined 'mind-wander' while reading orally in the experiment with seventy-four adult participants. According to them, being able to read aloud while mind-wandering proves that there is a remarkable automatism of processing the words in the act of reading aloud. Therefore, automatically processing the text without attending to meaning can be a legitimate concern for learners' OR practice.

Therefore, when assessing students' OR performance, comprehension needs to be taken into account along with other component skills to verify that the purpose of reading is not misunderstood to be mere reading speed or accurate word reading.

## 2.2. Research on OR Practice in the L2 Context

This section introduces research on OR practice in the L2 context. Section 2.2.1 discusses existing claims on how OR should be used for ESL or EFL learners. In section 2.2.2, empirical studies are reviewed, focusing on the proficiency levels of targeted participants.

## 2.2.1. Uses of OR in the L2 Context

Many education scholars have attempted to answer the question of whether L2 learners could also benefit from OR practice. In the L2 context, knowledge of graphemes-phonemes relationships has been particularly emphasized by reading researchers. Since unfamiliar sounds cause difficulties for L2 learners to learn and retrieve words, form-based (phonology) vocabulary learning is recommended along with meaning-based vocabulary learning to promote effective L2 learners' word learning (de Ven, Segers, & Verhoeven, 2018). In a similar vein, Taguchi and Gorsuch (2012) underlined the importance of OR for L2 learners. According to them, L2 readers have far less exposure to print and are provided with less opportunity to practice matching sounds to the letters, which makes it hard for L2 learners to develop automatic word recognition skills (p. 256). Therefore, additional practice to improve automatic word recognition is greatly required for L2 readers.

In addition, Gibson (2008) recommends OR activity as "individual language

learning strategies" (p. 32). Quoting Stevick (1989), who conducted a qualitative study with seven successful language learners, Gibson takes note of the tendency that successful language learners often employed the OR mode for a variety of reasons. OR helped them to practice prosodic features of language and pronunciation, to better comprehend the texts through appropriate chunking, or to memorize new words. If used carefully and appropriately, Gibson notes, OR can be a valuable teaching and learning tool in and outside of the classroom.

In a Washington state survey with ESL teachers of adult reading instruction, the majority of respondents reported various benefits of OR: expansion of oral vocabulary, developing awareness of the sounds, facilitation of chunking of words in meaningful groups, and development of self-confidence, the opportunity to evaluate learners' reading skills (Mckay & Griffin, 1992). Mckay and Griffin conclude that OR "deserves serious consideration, particularly by teachers of ESL students at beginning reading levels" (p. 786). The findings from this survey overlap with the list of benefits of OR suggested in the L1 context. The defense of OR by Kailani (1998) also covers the benefits of OR in word recognition, fluency, pronunciation and oral communication as well as reading comprehension.

Interestingly, however, Gibson (2008) and Gabrielatos (2002) abandoned the benefits of OR in comprehension, claiming that comprehension should not be the main purpose of the activity. Gibson seems to think that OR is the preliminary stages for building word recognition skills and fluency, but that it hardly serves the improvements of comprehension. They are not the only ones who doubt the effectiveness of OR for improving comprehension in the L2 context. Brown and

Lee (2015), who obviously advocate focusing on the silent reading mode, argue that readers easily lose attention while reading orally, thereby the act becoming "mere recitation" (p. 408) without attending to meaning. They recommend OR for beginning and intermediate levels only for the purposes of bottom-up processing skills, pronunciation check, and participation.

To make it clear, the above skepticisms are not incompatible with the fact that OR helps to build essential reading skills such as rapid and automatic word recognition, which in turn would contribute to better performances in comprehension. In other words, they seem to recommend that focus may as well be on practicing reading skills other than on comprehension.

## 2.2.2. Empirical Studies of OR in the L2 Context

While theoretical perspectives are diverged on positive effects of OR on reading comprehension in the L2 context, numerous empirical studies have attempted to examine the issue and consequently reported its usefulness.

As in the L1 context, several studies investigated the impacts of oral versus silent reading on reading comprehension in ESL or EFL contexts. In the experiment by Alshumaimeri (2011), for example, 145 Saudi EFL 10th grade male students read three comparable passages in three ways: orally, silently, and sub-vocally. They were asked five comprehension questions and the scores were compared across the reading manners. The results show that the participants, who were at A1 level of the European Framework, comprehended the texts best after

reading orally. In the following interview, the participants reported that OR helped to better memorize words and texts, and concentrate on the texts more. As for more advanced learners, Wang and Won (2017) found that the Chinese learners of Korean language preferred to read orally when they could not understand the text or they had to memorize some parts of the text. For easy texts, there was little difference in comprehension between oral and silent reading, while for more difficult texts, the participants comprehended better after reading orally. Studies such as the above ones demonstrate that adopting OR mode could result in better comprehension not only for lower-level learners but also for advanced learners in certain contexts.

Also noteworthy are the studies that examined the impacts of OR instruction on learners' reading abilities in Korean classrooms (Jeon, 2012; Jeon, 2014; Kim, 2012; Moon, 2015; Yoon, 2016; Yu, 2015). Numerous researchers implemented OR program with elementary school students (Jeon, 2014; Kim, 2012; Yoon, 2016). For example, ninety-two 6th graders read English storybooks for one hour per session, and the results of 45 sessions indicated that the OR group outperformed the silent reading group in English achievement test, though there was no statistically significant difference (Yoon, 2016). Jeon (2014) and Kim (2012) reported consistent results with similar designs, that elementary school students, who are at the beginning stages of learning English language, benefited much from OR implementation in classrooms. This seems to be in line with previous findings in the L1 literature that OR is particularly effective for beginning readers or less-skilled readers.

While numerous studies were found in elementary school context, there is a paucity of research that investigated the effects of OR on ESL or EFL secondary school students. Yet, a host of studies were conducted with college-level students, and reported that OR was effective in improving students' reading skills as well as building their confidence (Jeon, 2012; Moon, 2015; Yu, 2015).

Yu (2015) and Moon (2015) targeted learners of lower or low-intermediate proficiency levels in college classrooms. Moon (2015) found OR homework to be beneficial for college students of low-intermediate English proficiency in improving reading comprehension and vocabulary knowledge. In her experiment, 138 students were randomly assigned five different types of homework: translation, reading while listening, reading out loud, listening only, and silent reading. The results of the post-test after 15 weeks revealed that the reading out loud group outperformed the other groups in reading comprehension and vocabulary questions. In Yu's (2015) study, however, the lower level group gained little benefit through OR practice while the upper level group improved their vocabulary, syntactic knowledge, text comprehension, pronunciation, and word stress, which is somewhat conflicting with the above findings.

Meanwhile, in Jeon's (2012) study, eighteen Korean college students, who were regarded as having intermediate-level proficiency of English, were instructed reading pausal units aloud in a formal English reading classroom for one semester. Significant differences were found in the students' scores between pre-test and post-test, which included cloze test, reading speed test, and recall test. Conversely, in Jiang's (2015) experiment, Chinese college students of upper level of English

proficiency benefited little from oral reading mode. The participants of Jiang's study performed better in reading comprehension after silent reading, and reported in the post-interview that they were more accustomed to silent reading, and it helped to better concentrate on the text, allowing more cognitive capacity to be invested in understanding. Jiang's (2015) findings seem to be consistent with the claims in the L1 context that OR might be ineffective for those who already went through transition from oral to silent reading, so felt more comfortable when reading silently.

As can be noted, further work needs to be done to establish how OR contributes to learners' reading abilities, especially for older but less-skilled readers. Besides, the types of intervention varied much across the aforementioned studies; Jeon (2012) focused on in-class phrasing instruction, and in Moon's (2015) study, OR homework was one of the independent variables along with other types of homework. Furthermore, the studies above measured the improvements of the participants' abilities through the comparison of pre- and post-test, which makes it hard to capture how their reading skills developed over time. In order to examine the impacts of the instruction, direct, long-term observation is required, as well as the participants' general perceptions towards this type of intervention.

Recently, L2 learners' oral reading fluency has been attracting considerable interests (Grabe, 2009; Taguchi & Gorsuch, 2012). The recent research by Ryu (2018) investigated Korean EFL high school students' oral reading fluency and their previous English learning experiences. This study is inspiring in that it

diagnosed Korean EFL secondary school students' oral reading fluency, and that it provided an opportunity to take a glance at how individual secondary school students read the given texts; how fast and how accurately they read, how they access meaning while reading orally.

Overall, the components such as reading rate, accuracy, and fluency that were emphasized in the L1 context seem to be not regarded as important in the L2 context (Ryu, 2018). Accordingly, the participants' improvements are frequently evaluated through comparison between pre-, and post-test as can be seen from parts of the literature that were reviewed so far. The primary focus of OR instruction has been placed on the improvements in reading comprehension as well as in vocabulary and syntactic knowledge, and the effects on affective aspects seem to have been investigated on the surface level using post interviews or questionnaires.

## 2.3. Limitation of Previous Studies

There has been a growing body of research in the L1 context on the use of OR as an instructional tool. The related studies mostly focused on improving reading skills of less-skilled or beginning readers, and there is a general consensus that the intervention with OR is beneficial for these learners. However, there is a paucity of studies employing this type of instruction in L2 classrooms. A few existing studies in Korean context were conducted mostly with elementary school students (Jeon, 2014; Kim, 2012; Yoon, 2016) or college-level students (Jeon, 2012; Moon,

2015; Yu, 2015), and the participants' proficiency level greatly varied across studies, especially in the college-level context. Moreover, findings with lower-level college students were controversial in terms of the effects of OR intervention on their overall improvements in reading skills. More work on its effect on lower-level students would enlighten us on the strategic use of OR practice.

Furthermore, L2 learners are scarcely evaluated on more various aspects of reading other than reading comprehension, such as reading rate and accuracy, though listening students to read aloud could provide much valuable information about their current reading abilities and potential problems. If formative assessments on these components are administered along with the instruction, it might help to look into how their reading skills are developed over time.

Lastly, how L2 learners perceive and respond to OR instruction, their behavioral characteristics during and personal thoughts on the activity, needs to be further investigated, which inevitably demands a qualitative approach. Many studies have examined participants' attitudes, interests, or confidence through post-interviews, which focused only on general impressions on the experience. Therefore, the present study attempts to gain more detailed, additional information on how Korean EFL middle school students experience and respond to OR practice.

The present study referred to Merriam's (1998) approach to case-study design and Yazan's (2015) analysis of it. The aforementioned limitations of previous studies helped to identify research problems, leading to craft and sharpen research questions presented in section 1.2: 1) how Korean EFL middle school students

experience OR instruction, and 2) how they develop their reading skills in terms of reading rate, accuracy, and comprehension. Then, the participants were selected using purposive sampling, because there is lack of research targeting lower-level secondary school students. The next chapter presents the methodology of the present study in detail.

# CHAPTER 3.
# METHODOLOGY

This chapter contains a discussion of the methodological approach and research design best suited to examine the research questions set out in Chapter 2. Section 3.1 provides the detailed information about the research participants. In Section 3.2, materials used in the present study are introduced. Section 3.3 describes the specific procedure of the research, including settings, data collection, and data transcription. The chapter ends with an illustration of the methods used for data analysis.

## 3.1. Participants

Two Korean male EFL middle school students, Jaesung and Eunwoo[1], voluntarily participated in this study. The two participants were third graders attending a middle school located in Seoul, Korea, when the study was conducted. The participants had learned English as a foreign language in Korea for 8 or 9 years in school and *hakwon*, Korean private educational institution. None of them have lived nor studied in English-speaking countries. To gain unbiased insights from their OR experiences, no particular benefits were promised to the students beforehand, nor any explanation were provided on why they should be engaged in

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[1] Pseudonyms are used to protect the participants' anonymity.

OR practice. Yet both participants were eager to improve their English proficiency, and despite unfamiliarity that they must have felt towards the activity, they showed enthusiastic and sincere attitude to participation.

The participants' English proficiency was assumed as lower-intermediate level according to their self-reported English test scores in school. The school that the participants attend provides differentiated English instruction, according to students' test scores. Students from two classes are divided into three groups; the upper 50% students are assigned to an advanced group, the next 25% ones to an intermediate group, and the rest to a lower-level group. Jaesung and Eunwoo both belonged to the second group at the moment, although in the former semester Eunwoo had been at the lower-level group.

Using the semi-constructed interview questions, previous English learning experience of the participants and their attitudes towards English learning were explored (for a list of interview questions, see Appendix A). Jaesung started to learn English in *hakwon* first at the age of nine, and then from school one year later. He has attended several *hakwon*s, and in one of those *hakwon*s he took an English conversation class for a year. Yet he has seldom experienced any instruction that includes OR practice. When asked to relate any similar experience, he recalled that he often sings pop songs, reading along the lyrics. This experience was the closest equivalent to OR experience for him. Aside from this, he has hardly read storybooks or any other forms of writing in English except the textbooks or materials used in school and *hakwon*.

Eunwoo started to learn English when he was eight years old. He had attended

English *hakwon* for five years. According to Eunwoo, for the first three years students usually listened to the audio book and repeated the sentences, and afterwards grammar became the main focus of class. Regarding the former period, he commented that the sentences were quite easy and he performed very well. During the activity, Eunwoo listened to the audio file, without looking at paper-based books. At the time of participating in the present study, he was attending a *hakwon*, where major focus was on improving students' reading skills and grammar knowledge.

Although he had rarely read texts aloud in English before, Eunwoo had a few experiences of conversing with English-speaking tourists where he felt he had no difficulties. However, after the level test he assumed an attitude far from being confident, on which he commented as shown in Excerpt 3.1:

Exerpt 3.1 I feel ashamed when speaking English in front of other people. I don't know. I lose confidence. (The researcher pointed out, "You said you were confident in speaking English in everyday lives.") Yes, but reading books aloud is embarrassing. I don't know. It isn't working the way I want. It's embarrassing.[2] (Eunwoo's interview quote, Session 1)

It seems that for him reading books aloud was a lot different from communicating with foreigners on some limited extent of topics. The level test

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[2] All the interview excerpts have been translated.

was almost Eunwoo's first experience of making sounds of the written text.

It seemed evident that none of these participants had sufficient experience of reading English texts aloud, although they spent quite a long time learning English. What Eunwoo felt during the level test may be related to lack of such experience. When asked how much they think students actually read orally in school, Jaesung answered that he felt it might account for merely about ten to twenty percentage of the whole class time. Yet, even those occasions indicated the time when a teacher forced some students to read aloud a part of the textbook to make them concentrate on class. Similarly, Eunwoo also commented that students who fell asleep during the class were asked to read aloud the textbook.

The participants' responses to the subsequent interview questions show that main focus in learning English was on reading, vocabulary, and grammar both in school and *hakwon*, probably because those are the very elements that are being measured in school tests. Performance-based speaking test results are included in the total test score, but even in that test, full score can be achieved if the student memorizes all the given sentences. Accordingly, the participants' attention was far more devoted to receptive skills along with grammar and vocabulary. Regarding any difficulties in learning English, both participants replied that grammar was the most challenging area for them.

## 3.2. Materials

The present study employed *Pearson English Readers* as reading materials for

the level test and the instruction. *Pearson English Readers* provides graded readers that include seven levels, from Easystart to Level 6. Each text is graded by several criteria such as number of headwords, vocabulary, sentence length and complexity, and structure (grammar). Each level is correlated to Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR) and Global Scale of English[3] (GSE) bands, allowing for comparison and easy placement (see Figure 3.1). The texts from *Pearson English Readers* include not only original stories of its own, but also world-renowned literature, plays, short stories, non-fiction, biography, and film/TV adaptations rewritten and adjusted for each level. Many of those were published in the form of eBook and are available for purchase on Google Play or Amazon.

| | | GSE 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Level 6 | 3000 headwords | | | | | | | | ▓ | |
| Level 5 | 2300 headwords | | | | | | ▓ | ▓ | | |
| Level 4 | 1700 headwords | | | | | ▓ | | | | |
| Level 3 | 1200 headwords | | | ▓ | | | | | | |
| Level 2 | 600 headwords | | | ▓ | | | | | | |
| Level 1 | 300 headwords | | ▓ | | | | | | | |
| Easystarts | 200 headwords | | ▓ | | | | | | | |
| | | CEFR <A1 | A1 | A2 + | B1 + | B2 + | C1 | C2 | | |
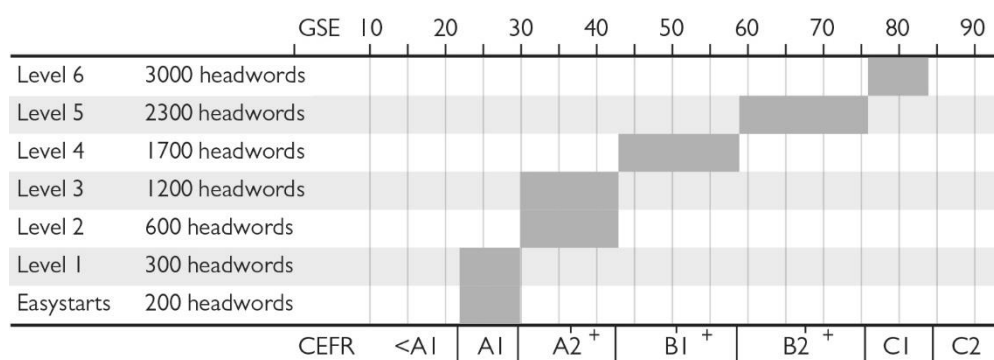
Figure 3.1. Correlation Chart with CEFR and GSE

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[3] Global Scale of English (GSE) is the English language standard set alongside the CEFR. Its scale and toolkit provides level-appropriate learning objectives, grammar and vocabulary to support teaching and learning.

Each participant was placed at certain level as a result of the level test conducted during the 1st session. The level test was administered to select level-appropriate materials for the experiment, using the *Pearson English Readers* sample pages online. Participants read a level 1 sample page first, and for confirmation read another level 1 sample page, or read a level 2 text according to the accuracy calculated by the percentage of words read correctly. According to Rasinski (2010), texts are divided into three levels, independent, instructional, and frustration level according to learners' word recognition accuracy in the texts (see Table 3.1). Rasinski recommends using instructional-level materials for OR instruction (p. 182), of which guideline the present study followed.

Table 3.1 Reading Levels by Word Recognition Accuracy (Rasinski, 2010)

| Level | Accuracy | Explanation |
|---|---|---|
| Independent Level | 98-100% | Student can read text independently without assistance. |
| Instructional Level | 92-98% | Student can read text with instructional assistance. |
| Frustration Level | Below 92% | Student had great difficulty reading the text, even with assistance |

The results of the level test are presented in Table 3.2. Jaesung read the given texts with accuracy higher than 98% in both level 1 and level 2, but for confirmation read level 2 text once more and was classified into level 2 with the accuracy of 97.47%. When Eunwoo read level 1 twice, both times indicated instructional level, thus classified into level 1.

Table 3.2 Results of the Level Test

|  | Jaesung | Eunwoo |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Level 1 | 98.10 | 97.16/97.6 |
| Level 2 | 98.15/97.47 | |

According to the criteria of *Pearson English Readers*, the level 1 and level 2 correspond to the A1 and A2 level respectively of the Common European Framework for Reference for Languages (CEFR). Since the A1 and A2 level are the two lowest levels of CEFR, the level test once more demonstrated the participants' relatively lower proficiency of English. The text levels, however, were flexibly adjusted when a participant had difficulty in reading at certain level or asked for more challenging texts.

The participants were asked to select the material that they wanted to read after browsing brief introductions of each text. The participants were told that they could stop reading whenever they wanted to, and choose another book to read. When one book was finished, the student was asked to choose the next reading material. The materials that the participants read throughout the experiment are as shown in Table 3.3:

Table 3.3. List of Materials Used in the Experiment

|    | Title | Lv. | # of Words | Session |
|----|-------|-----|-----------|---------|
| JS | Extreme Sports | 2 | 4,128 | 2-4 |
|    | Audrey Hepburn | 2 | 3,888 | 5-7, 14-15 |
|    | Pele: Edution 2 | 1 | 1,969 | 8-9 |
|    | Muhammad Ali | 1 | 2,451 | 10-11 |
|    | Michael Jordan: Edition 2 | 1 | 1,960 | 12-13 |
|    | Total | | 14,396 | |
| EW | The Adventure of Tom Sawyer: Edition 2 (Retold by Jacqueline Kehl) | 1 | 4,003 | 2-5 |
|    | Pele: Edition 2 | 1 | 1,969 | 6-7 |
|    | The Missing Coins: Edition 2 | 1 | 1,711 | 8-9 |
|    | Michael Jordan: Edition 2 | 1 | 1,960 | 10-11 |
|    | White Fang (Retold by Brigit Viney) | 2 | 7,746 | 12-15 |
|    | Total | | 17,389 | |

Each participant read 5 books in total, which amount approximately to 14,000 words for Jaesung and to 12,000 words for Eunwoo respectively (Eunwoo could not finish *White Fang*). Although both fiction and non-fiction genres took the form of narratives, the participants' preferences were evidently different. As Table 3.3 shows, Jaesung was extremely reluctant to read a novel. For this reason, four out of five texts in his list are life stories of famous sports stars or celebrities such as Audrey Hepburn. *Extreme Sports* is a collection of true stories of extreme sportsmen. On the contrary, Eunwoo preferred reading novels, although he also read the stories of Pele and Michael Jordan. Note that Jaesung changed the text level in the 8th session, and in the 15th session went back to level 2 text and finished reading *Audrey Hepburn*. Eunwoo read level 1 texts until he, full of confidence towards the end of the experiment, decided to attempt at reading level

2 text for the last four sessions.

## 3.3. Procedure

All procedures were conducted on a one-to-one basis between a participant and the researcher. The time for data collection was flexibly adjusted to the participants' schedules. The sessions were conducted from one to three times per week, and each session lasted approximately one hour. The place for collecting data was quiet study cafés located in Seoul.

### 3.3.1. Data Collection

The process of data collection across 16 sessions is presented in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4 The Data Collection Procedure

| Session | Activities |
| --- | --- |
| 1st session | Level Test |
|  | Semi-structured Interview |
| 2nd-15th session | Phase 1: Review of Assignments |
|  | Phase 2: Modeling and Practicing |
|  | Phase 3: OR Alone |
|  | Phase 4: Interview |
| 16th session | Semi-structured Interview |

As mentioned earlier, the level test and the intensive preliminary interview were conducted in the 1st session. The main questions of the interview included the

participants' previous experience of learning English and their perceptions towards it. The interview lasted about 30 minutes.

During the next 14 sessions, intensive OR practices were conducted using the books selected by the participants. Before reading the book for the first time, each participant was asked to share their background knowledge about the book or the theme, and to predict what kind of story would unfold. In Phase 2, the researcher provided modeling about one or two chapters for 15 minutes and subsequently the participant read the same part. At first, modeling was administered sentence by sentence and then over time it was switched to a passage-by-passage manner.

From the 3rd session, the participants were engaged in recording homework and the review of those assignments marks the Phase 1. After one session was finished, they were asked to read the next several paragraphs, usually one chapter, as homework. From the 8th session, they were also asked to read the same chapter twice, which was intended for them to compare two versions during the review. The major purpose of assigning homework was to provide opportunities for practicing OR alone and to raise awareness on self-analysis of their reading. The participant and the researcher listened to the recorded files sent by the participant before the meeting, discussed what was done well, what needed to be improved, and shared the impression towards the participant's performance.

After the review of assignments, and modeling and practicing, the participants read the text alone (Phase 3). While they were reading, the researcher did not intervene, except sometimes adding some feedback such as "slowly" and "you need to focus on meaning." The researcher checked the time it took for the

participants to read a part and the decoding errors that they made, and afterwards the participants retold what they read. The researcher taught important vocabulary and discussed difficult parts, but refrained from explaining grammar or infrequent words.

In Phase 4, informal interviews were conducted. In the sessional interviews, the participants were induced to share the difficulties they felt with the instructor, and to report any changes in their thoughts or attitudes. Brief evaluation on their performance and words of encouragement were provided as well.

## 3.3.2. Data Documentation

The present study includes two major types of data. One is the transcribed document of the recorded files, and the other is the results of measurement of reading rate, accuracy, and comprehension. For the former, the whole interaction between the instructor and the participants were transcribed verbatim for later in-depth analysis (Phase 1, 2, and 4). Regarding the latter, the researcher listened carefully to the participants' reading several times that were recorded every session during the Phase 3 (students' OR alone) and organized each data for the three components separately. First, reading rate was marked with calculated numerical value, including exact information about the number of words read and the time required. Second, decoding errors were listed using the acronym of the types of errors: mispronunciation (M), substitution (S), insertion (I), omission (O), and examiner-help (EH). Next, retell was transcribed exactly as the participants

stated. Lastly, if the participants produced any distinctive verbal responses during the measurement, the utterances were also transcribed verbatim in a separate cell along with the context. The types of data of the present study and the examples are presented in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5 Data Documentation Sample

| Phase | Types of Data |
| --- | --- |
| Phase 1 | … |
| Phase 2 | |
| Phase 4 | |
| Phase 3 | 1. Rate |
| | ex) 50 wpm (100 words for 2 min.) |
| | 2. Decoding Errors |
| | ex) says -> said (S) |
| | 3. Retell |
| | … |
| | 4. Other Verbal Responses |
| | ex) This is so difficult! (after reading the first passage) |

## 3.4. Data Analysis

The participants' reading performances were observed and measured over a total of fourteen sessions, focusing primarily on their reading rate, decoding errors, and comprehension. The participants read two pieces of text, each containing around 200-300 words, usually one-chapter length. A relatively longer chapter was divided into two parts by the researcher on the basis of shifts in scenes or themes. Detailed methods for measuring each component and the interview

transcript are presented in the following sections.

## 3.4.1. Analysis of the Participants' OR

The participants' OR performances were analyzed in terms of three major components, reading rate, accuracy, and comprehension. The next three subsections introduce the methods of analysis for each component.

### 3.4.1.1. Reading Rate

Oral reading rate was yielded by computing the number of Words read Per Minute (WPM). The formula for computing WPM is as follows:

$$\text{Reading rate (wpm)} = \frac{60 \times \text{No. of words in passage}}{\text{No. of seconds needed to read passage}}$$

For example, if a participant read 100 words in 2 minutes, reading rate is

$$\frac{60 \times 100 \text{ (words)}}{120 \text{ (seconds)}} = 50 \text{ wpm}$$

Instead of averaging the two reading rate on each session, both the first and second reading rate calculated were presented separately in the results section to capture diverse variability in the students' reading rate and in the sources behind

the phenomena. The changes in reading rate of the participants were illustrated using polygonal line, and discussed in terms of the improvements, declines, and peculiarity.

### 3.4.1.2. Decoding Errors

Morris et al. (2013, 2017) categorized the decoding errors into five types: substitution, omission, insertions, examiner-helps and self-correction. The present study included mispronunciation as the sixth type of decoding errors as Ryu (2018) did in her measurement of word recognition accuracy (WRA): mispronunciation, substitution, omission, insertions, and examiner-help. Mispronunciation is an error that L2 learners are more likely to commit than L1 learners. Unlike L1 learners who are skillful at grapheme-phoneme connections thanks to an enormous amount of input, L2 learners may not be able to pronounce some words correctly even if they know the meaning of the words. It is thought that by looking into the mispronunciation data, it is possible to examine the developmental stages of phonological awareness of the participants. Also, although some researchers excluded self-correction from their measurement of decoding errors (McKenna & Stahl, 2009; Ryu, 2018), the present study maintained that type because self-corrections manifest the learners' initial misreading of a word (Morris, 2013, p. 56).

While the participants read aloud the given texts alone, the decoding errors made were checked and classified into a corresponding type. Examiner-helps were

provided when the participants took more than 3 seconds to read a specific word and still failed to manage to read it. Regarding two phonologically similar words such as *work* and *walk*, for example, the utterance was classified as mispronunciation if the meaning was correctly understood. On the other hand, if the meaning of one word was understood as that of the other one, the error was classified as substitution.

The participants' decoding errors made during the entire session were arranged in a table. Repeated errors or noticeable features were analyzed qualitatively along with the description of general patterns.

## 3.4.1.3. Reading Comprehension Measured by Oral Retell

Retell has been frequently used as a tool for measuring reading comprehension. Retell is straightforward and easy to administer but the scoring process is extremely difficult and time consuming (Fuchs, Fuchs, & Maxwell, 1988; Johnson, 1970). According to Roberts, Good, and Corcoran (2005), however, retell is often preferred over other forms of measuring comprehension due to its allowance for observing variable behaviors, time efficiency, and usefulness in an instructional sequence (p. 308). This study adopted retell as a measurement method for the same reasons as above. Simply answering some comprehension questions might fail to verify if learners actually understood the content without being influenced by the clues in questions. Retell was expected to help to examine what parts were understood and what parts were not, or what other behaviors were exhibited.

The participants were told that they would be asked to retell what they have read after reading the passage. Upon completing reading, the participants told as much as they remembered in Korean. If the participants paused and did not continue, the researcher provided a prompt such as "Anything else?" until the participant answered "Nothing else."

Retell has been measured using many different methods: the percentage of propositions retold by the reader, the total number of words retold, or idea units included in retell (Leslie & Caldwell, 1995, p. 11-12). Although there are many different, and possibly more reliable ways to measure students' retell, the present study adopted a well-formulated holistic rubric, because the purpose of measuring retell was to roughly check how well the participants understood each text, not to be thorough in analyzing each score quantitatively. Retell was evaluated using a holistic rubric adapted from the retell component of the Texas Middle School Fluency Assessment (Reed, Vaughn, & Petscher, 2012; Texas Education Agency, University of Houston, & The University of Texas System, 2008). The original four-point scale (0-3) was subdivided into six-point scale (0-5) in order to better capture subtle differences in the participants' retell. The adapted retell rubric is presented in Table 3.6.

Table 3.6 Holistic Rubric for Assessing Reading Comprehension

(Adapted from Texas Education Agency et al., 2008)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Strong** | 5 | - Accurately reports information in the passage.<br>- Contains the most important point from the passage.<br>- Is coherently stated and reflects the proper relationship among the ideas.<br>- Response reflects a clear understanding of the main idea. |
| | 4 | - Shows a clear understanding of the main idea<br>- Contains a few, but negligible inaccuracies |
| **Partial** | 3 | - Contains basic information from the passage, but not the most important point.<br>- Partial understanding of the main idea.<br>- Contains some minor inaccuracies. |
| | 2 | - Is not concisely stated and/or does not reflect the relationship among the ideas.<br>- Mostly consists of an isolated fact or name from the passage<br>- Contains some significant inaccuracies |
| **Weak** | 1 | - Consists of an isolated fact or name from the passage.<br>- Is rambling or incoherent.<br>- No apparent understanding of the main idea. |
| | 0 | - Contains information that was not in the passage or that misinterprets information in the passage. |

In addition to 0-5 scale of retell score, qualitative analysis of the participants' retell was conducted. Scoring was carried out with the help of a co-rater, who had lived in English-speaking countries for eight years and is currently attending doctoral course in English education. Inter-rater reliability coefficient, conducted on 10% of the protocols, was found to be .867.

## 3.4.2. Analysis of Interviews

Interview data were analyzed qualitatively in order to uncover the participants' perceptions during sixteen-session OR practice. The documented data were coded

according to the key focusing questions. According to Creswell (2013), coding is the process of categorizing the data and labeling them with a term. Following the steps in the coding process suggested by Tesch (1990), the data was first read carefully, and then the topics were drawn and listed. The appropriate abbreviation was decided, and finally the data were categorized, labelled with the corresponding code. In the present study, both predetermined and emerging codes were used. Table 3.7 illustrates the coding scheme for the interview transcript.

Table 3.7 The Coding Scheme for the Interview Transcript

**Responses to OR Instruction**
1. Decoding (D)
2. Reading Rate (R)
3. Phrasing practice and thoughts on the activity (P)
4. Reading Comprehension (C)
5. Attitudes and affective dimension (AA)
6. Reflections and self-regulation on performance (RF)
7. Difficulties in OR practice (DF)
8. Distinctive behavioral patterns (B)

**Responses on Measured Elements during Assessment**
1. Reading Rate (R)
2. Reading Accuracy (A)
3. Reading Comprehension (C)

According to the principles of "making meaning" in case-study by Merriam (1998), what was measured, what the participants said, and what the researcher has seen were consolidated and interpreted along with thick description of the issues at hand.

# CHAPTER 4.
# FLUENCY vs. COMPREHENSION:
# THE CASE OF JAESUNG

In Chapter 4, the case of Jaesung is delineated and discussed in terms of his responses to OR instruction and changes in reading rate, accuracy, and comprehension. Section 4.1 discusses the characteristics of Jaesung's reading behaviors during the OR practice along with his thoughts and opinions on the experience. In Section 4.2, Jaesung's reading rate, accuracy, and comprehension measured each session are presented and analyzed respectively.

## 4.1. Jaesung's OR Experience during the Instruction

In his recording assignments, Jaesung made few errors other than mispronunciation throughout the entire instruction phase. When Jaesung was first provided with modeling in the 2nd session, he mentioned that the advantage of modeling was that he could listen to the instructor's word pronunciation first. Likewise, during the post-interview in the 16th session, he chose the instruction of word pronunciation as the third memorable feedback, and delivered his thoughts on word pronunciation as shown in Excerpt 4.1:

Excerpt 4.1. I know the meaning of the word, but sometimes I don't know how to pronounce it. I cared about those things because I knew the word in my

head, but in fact I didn′t know it. (Jaesung′s Interview Quote, Session 16)

Accordingly, Jaesung showed great interest in pronunciation correction throughout the experiment. He listened carefully to the pronunciation that the instructor modeled, and then pronounced it exactly when the same word appeared later. For instance, when he pronounced *Asian* as [ɑʃɪɑn] in a Korean way in the 4th session, the instructor corrected it with the original English pronunciation [eɪʃn]. In the 5th session, he correctly pronounced the same word right away. Such cases frequently occurred. Especially, huge efforts have been made on the part of Jaesung to acquire English pronunciation for the words that are differently pronounced between Korean and English, such as *ballet* (session 6), *Italy* (session 9), and *Vietnam* (session 11). In the 6th session, he was struggling to pronounce the word *ballet*, of which the instructor had corrected the pronunciation on the former session, even if it delayed the whole reading process.

In addition, he was conscious of selectively pronouncing *the* (session 5 and 15), either as [ðə] or [ði] depending on the initial letter of the following word, even though the instructor had never mentioned the issue. Also, Jaesung had difficulty in reading large numbers such as *1500* and *8000* and years such as *1966* and *1970*, and when encountered with the dollar sign (＄), he even avoided reading it. Jaesung was learning to make sound of the words that he had known for a long time, but did not know how to pronounce. Despite constant troubles in pronouncing specific words, however, he reported that he never looked up the dictionary. Rather, he asked directly the instructor about how to pronounce those

words. Usually, he was encouraged to figure it out on his own, and when he gets the right answer, he seemed to try to keep that in mind, as if not to make the same errors later. In fact, Jaesung rarely made the same error again once its pronunciation was explicitly taught or corrected by the instructor.

Meanwhile, Jaesung was as conscious of reading rate as of pronunciation. Since when the instructor asked him to record the same text twice he also became interested in increasing reading rate. He commented, ″I did very well″ after listening to the second version of assignment in the 9th session, on the basis of the fact that he read the given text fluently, without any hesitation or awkward pause.

However, he also realized that overall accuracy and appropriate chunking deteriorated during the second reading though rate increased. In his comment ″The second version was too fast,″ it was implied that he was in such a hurry that the quality of performance was worse even than the first version (session 11). He also made more decoding errors in the second version. Moreover, to make matters worse, it became clear as each session proceeded that Jaesung had difficulty in understanding the text, or was not paying enough attention to the content. While possible reasons were being sought, it was observed during the first two sessions (2nd and 3rd session) that Jaesung hardly paused even between the sentences. Actually, chunking had seemed to be another major problem in his reading, so from the 4th session the instructor drew Jaesung′s attention to that issue.

To raise his awareness on chunking, the instructor asked him to listen to the recorded assignment, paying additional attention to pauses. However, Jaesung did not problematize the lack of pauses between the sentences and the phrases. Rather,

he wanted to minimize the awkward pauses to achieve better fluency and greater reading speed. When the instructor directly addressed the issue that was initially intended, he replied that he had noticed it as well. The instructor made it clear that there should be a longer pause between the sentences, as signified by the punctuation mark. In order to highlight a clear pause at the end of the sentence, the instructor began to provide modeling passage by passage instead of sentence by sentence. The direct feedback took effect instantly since afterwards Jaesung consciously paid attention to giving pauses between the sentences. Whenever he noticed that he jumped over the next sentence rather hastily, he read the previous sentence again and made sure that he paused sufficiently before moving to the next one. At the same time, he was encouraged to summarize each sentence at moments of pause before reading the next one. He stated, ″Now I give pauses, and at those moments I try to remember the content″ (session 5).

From the 5th session, focus was placed on appropriate chunking within a sentence. However, Jaesung failed to answer to the question about how to group words into chunks. He only mentioned 'commas' in an uncertain manner. See the following sentence from *Muhammad Ali*:

In 1994 the manager of Bauru Atletico, a big soccer club, talked to Dondinho.

When asked to divide the above sentence into meaningful units, he put slashes only where commas were as in (1). Then, the instructor urged him to subdivide the sentence by putting more slashes, and Jaesung improperly gave a pause between

the preposition *of* and its complement noun phrase *Bauru Atletico* as in (2). Feeling weird, Jaesung moved the slash again this time before the preposition *of* as in (3).

    (1) In 1994 the manager of Baruru Atletico, / a big soccer club, / talked to Dondinho.

    (2) In 1994 the manager of **/** Bauru Atletico, / a big soccer club, / talked to Dondinho.

    (3) In 1994 the manager **/** of Bauru Atletico, / a big soccer club, / talked to Dondinho.

As a feedback the instructor emphasized distinguishing separate information included in the sentence. That is, *In 1994* must be one unit, referring to information about when the event occurred, and *the manager of Bauru Atletico* as another unit, this time information about who performed the action, and so on. Much practice was needed until Jaesung fully understood this principle, and correctly grouped words into meaningful units on his own. Towards the end of the experiment, he often thought over how to give pauses properly when encountered with a longer and more complicated sentence, and asked the instructor for help. It demonstrates that he became highly conscious of chunking problems.

Meanwhile, whereas he reported that chunking instruction was most memorable and there was improvement in his own performance, he evaluated its importance with six on a scale of one to nine, which was a high score but

relatively lower than the marks on reading rate 7, accuracy 8, and comprehension 9. Asked to elaborate on his evaluation, Jaesung replied as following:

Excerpt 4.2. It's true that when you talk chunking is less important than speed, accuracy, and comprehension. (..) When you speak, however, you don′t pause within a sentence that much. So chunking is not that important. (Jaesung′s Interview Quote, Session 16)

It appeared that Jaesung associated OR with speaking, so prioritizing reading texts fluently and rapidly rather than reading with pauses. The instructor wondered what influenced Jaesung′s thoughts, and he stated that watching American TV dramas seemed to have affected his view. Jaesung must have thought that ′native-like′ fluency was more related to reading speed and smoothness of utterances.

Also, Jaesung reported that the entire instruction lacked explanation of syntactic structures. He wished there had been more explicit instruction in terms of what is the subject and what is the verb, etc. Actually, using metalinguistic terms and analyzing the sentences in a traditional Grammar-Translation way were intentionally avoided. Instead, chunking was intended to serve as another approach to understand the structure of sentences. However, Jaesung appeared to see little correlation between them.

Therefore, his responses on the questionnaire appeared to have been influenced by the feedback from the instructor. For sure, Jaesung became highly conscious of chunking and comprehension strategies that he previously was not

familiar with. In the post-interview Jaesung delivered his thoughts on the importance of chunking and finding the main sentence, borrowing the instructor′s utterances exactly the same:

Excerpt 4.3. I was not good at chunking. But you said that it was important. So I practiced it and improved a lot.

Excerpt 4.4. I think it is important to remember the key sentence so I can weave them into one coherent story.

<div align="right">(Jaesung′s Interview Quote, Session 16)</div>

Jaesung′s attitude towards his own OR performance has dramatically changed. In the very last session, Jaesung listened to the two recorded files of his first and last assignment consecutively. Regarding the biggest change, he replied without slightest hesitation as following:

Excerpt 4.5. The tone itself has changed. At first, it was a low tone. But these days, definitely high tone. I was a little diffident at that time. It's okay now. (Jaesung's Interview Quote, Session 16)

In fact, the recorded files showed a clear difference in his tone. In the first assignment, his voice had been low, powerless, and monotonous. On the other hand, in the last assignment, Jaesung's voice was louder, more powerful, and a lot more rhythmical than before. These features are related to prosodic variations in

reading. Although prosody was not the major focus of the present study, it still is another important aspect in fluent reading (Miller & Schwanenflugel, 2006; Rasinski, 2010).

This change in his voice and the sounds he made has occurred gradually throughout the instruction phase. Jaesung, who first listened to his own speaking performance in English in the 2nd session, had laughed with painful expressions on his face. He stated that he would probably feel ashamed alone at night after going back home. Being a quite reserved and quiet student, Jaesung displayed his lack of confidence in speaking English. During the next few sessions, he still looked dispirited.

It was from the 8th session that his attitude began to change. As he started to read level 1 texts, which were quite easy for him, Jaesung′s reading became faster and more accurate, and comprehension almost perfect. In addition, the book he read in the 8th and 9th session was a story about Pele, a legendary football player. Jaesung had a great interest in soccer, and actually had broad background knowledge about Pele. Being satisfied with his performance, Jaesung began to tell stories about Pele to the instructor beside the contents of the text, and to be more interested in reading books.

When reviewing the assignment in the 9th session, he spoke highly of his own reading with the comment "very good.″ It was the first time he expressed such satisfaction with his own performance. In the 10th session, the instructor strongly felt that Jaesung′s reading was flawless in terms of rate and comprehensibility, and his attitude full of confidence. In 12th session, he was encountered with an

arithmetic expression. He had to read the following numbers alongside arithmetic symbols:

$$45 \div 2 = 22\frac{1}{2}$$

Feeling helpless, he read it in Korean, and later the instructor taught him how to read it. When the instructor suggested trying another example and he successfully read it correctly, he ejaculated with joy, "Wow." He seemed to be enjoying OR practice.

Of course, when he returned to read the level 2 text again in the 14th session, his performance went through a slight decline. His voice displayed both puzzlement and nervousness. In the 16th session, he said that his confidence lowered when reading in front of the instructor while he read freely and without much anxiety at home. Although reading alone was still more comfortable for him than in front of someone, Jaesung seemed to perceive some change as can be seen in his following comment "But now is better than before." This was the comment before Jaesung listened to the first assignment and compared it with the latest one.

Jaesung was a learner whose performance was greatly influenced by the level of texts. That is, when he was reading rather easy texts and felt confident, his performance was remarkable and showed improvements every session. On the other hand, when he felt dissatisfied with his own performance because of difficult texts, he became daunted and puzzled, thus making more errors and being less successful in comprehension. In fact, Jaesung's reading rate, accuracy, and

comprehension were greatly improved while reading level 1 texts. In addition, he participated more actively and was deeply involved in reading when reading about the topics that he was personally interested in and familiar with.

Another aspect that was new to Jaesung was reading experience itself. He had hardly read books even in Korean, letting alone in English. He gave a comment as ″It was fun. Even now I can remember things from those books.″ Level 1 texts agreed more with him not only in terms of the level but also of the topics. He felt particularly difficult reading *Audrey Hepburn*. The books that Jaesung read were mostly about someone′s life, so included in a single chapter were many different characters, names of place, and a variety of events. This aspect might have affected the difficulty that he felt while reading them. Other types of genre might have been less demanding to him, even though he clearly disliked reading fictions.

As mentioned previously, Jaesung related OR experience to speaking practice, which the instructor had never alluded to. When asked to state his general impression on the entire experience, he replied:

Excerpt 4.6. Actually, it (i.e. the OR experience) was helpful in reading. But I don′t think it would have much impact on speaking with foreigners. (..) We can read a text over and over again if we didn′t understand it. But with foreigners face to face.. (Jaesung′s Interview Quote, Session 16)

In the above excerpt, he made it clear that OR was unlikely to improve his speaking skills. In addition, he was highly skeptical of the probability that he

would have to read orally in the future. Yet, he added that one could practice OR alone with the help of dictionary, though it might be hard to implement it within classroom.

## 4.2. Diagnosis of Jaesung's OR Performance

During the Phase 3, where Jaesung read aloud alone, his reading rate was measured and decoding errors were analyzed. Then his immediate oral retell was evaluated using a holistic rubric. The following subsections report the findings and discuss each element one by one.

## 4.2.1. Reading Rate

In each session, Jaesung read aloud the two texts, each consisting of approximately 200-250 words. The reading rate was calculated as the number of words read per minute. The variance of the reading rate over a total of 14 sessions is shown in the following figure.
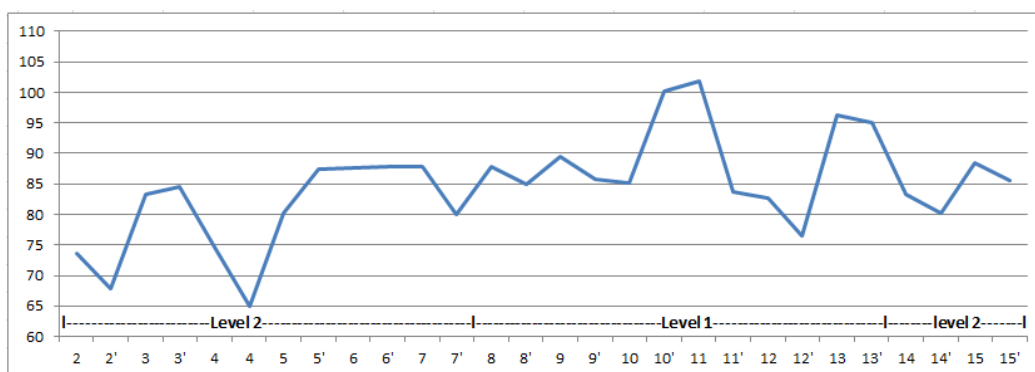
Figure 4.1. Reading Rate (Jaesung)

As can be seen from the figure, Jaesung's reading rate contains ups and downs rather than shows any kind of consistency. However, the initial speed of less than 70 words per minute (session 2 and 4) was not found in subsequent sessions, and occasionally a speed of around 100 words per minute was achieved (session 10 and 11), indicating general improvement. Naturally the reading rate was affected by the level of the text. Yet, after going on to *Audrey Hepburn* again in the 13th session, Jaesung did not go through drastic decline of reading rate, since his reading rate maintained above 80 words per minute.

As pointed out in the previous section, Jaesung was particularly engrossed in reading texts rapidly. Accordingly, he often failed to concentrate on the content or made more decoding errors than usual, being busy with merely reading words out loud. The instructor thereupon recommended several times reading at a moderate speed with adequate comprehension, rather than reading rapidly without grasping the meaning of the text. Towards the second half of the experiment, the instructor

said "slowly" almost every time Jaesung read the text (session 8, 9, 10, and 11). The instructor even modeled slower reading in order to accustom him to slower reading rate.

Jaesung was greatly affected by the feedback on reading rate. When he was told that he read more than 100 words per minute in the 10th session, the previous session, he expressed both surprise and delight, and seemed to attempt to read as fast as he could in the 11th session, as if to achieve a similar or higher degree. Jaesung seemed eager to increase his reading rate, although the instructor commented several times in the previous sessions that his reading was already quite fast.

Jaesung was asked to evaluate his own reading rate two times, in the 8th and 16th session, and he chose 4 on a scale of one to nine in the 8th session. This verifies his dissatisfaction with his reading rate on the earlier sessions. He later evaluated his reading rate with 7 on the same scale of one to nine in the last session of the experiment, which indicates that his satisfaction increased.

## 4.2.2. Reading Accuracy

During the 14-session experiment, Jaesung made 100 decoding errors in total. To bring a focus first on overall patterns, substitution accounted for the largest portions (51%), followed by examiner-help (20%) and mispronunciation (15%). Table 4.1 presents the frequency and percentage of decoding errors made by Jaesung. See Appendix D for a list of all the decoding errors.

Table 4.1. The Frequency and Percentage of Decoding Errors (Jaesung)

| Session | M* | S | O | I | EH | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2nd | 4 [2]** (0.8%) | 5 [4] (1.0%) | | | 3 (0.6%) | 12 [6] (2.5%) |
| 3rd | | 3 [2] (0.6%) | | | 2 (0.4%) | 5 [2] (0.9%) |
| 4th | 3 (0.7%) | 5 [3] (1.2%) | | 1 [1] (0.2%) | 1 (0.2%) | 10 [4] (2.5%) |
| 5th | 2 (0.4%) | 2 [1] (0.4%) | | | 1 (0.2%) | 5 [1] (1.1%) |
| 6th | | 2 [2] (0.5%) | | 1 (0.2%) | 1 (0.2%) | 4 [2] (0.9%) |
| 7th | 3 (0.7%) | 2 [1] (0.4%) | | | 1 (0.2%) | 6 [1] (1.3%) |
| 8th | | 3 [3] (0.6%) | 1 [1] (0.2%) | 4 (0.9%) | | 8 [4] (1.7%) |
| 9th | | 6 [4] (1.3%) | | | 1 (0.2%) | 7 [4] (1.5%) |
| 10th | 1 (0.2%) | 2 [1] (0.4%) | | | 1 (0.2%) | 4 [1] (0.9%) |
| 11st | 1 (0.2%) | 6 [3] (1.1%) | 2 [1] (0.4%) | | 2 (0.4%) | 11 [4] (2.0%) |
| 12st | 1 (0.2%) | 2 [1] 0.4%) | 1 [1] (0.2%) | | 3 (0.6%) | 7 [2] (1.5%) |
| 13st | | 3 [2] (0.7%) | 2 [1] (0.5%) | | 3 (0.7%) | 8 [3] (1.8%) |
| 14th | | 5 [1] (0.8%) | 1 (0.2%) | | | 6 [1] (1.0%) |
| 15th | | 5 [3] (1.1%) | 1 [1] (0.2%) | | | 6 [4] (1.3%) |
| Total | 15 (15%) | 51 (51%) | 8 (8%) | 6 (6%) | 20 (20%) | |

* M: mispronunciation, S: substitution, O: omission, I: insertion, EH: examiner-help
** []: the number of self-correction

Note that self-correction amounts to about 51% of the total decoding errors. As mentioned earlier, the self-correction was included in discussion because it still

indicates initial misreading of the words, although the participant noticed immediately that he made an error and quickly corrected it. Therefore, self-correction errors were also categorized into other types of decoding errors for discussion, and as Morris (2013) did, *sc* (self-correction) was marked in parentheses.

The number of substitution errors did not decrease significantly over the 14 sessions. However, the most noticeable is the fact that substituting words without any phonological similarity started to be generated in the latter part of the study. In other words, in the early sessions almost all substitutions occurred due to phonological similarity, but over time the words that are not phonologically similar in the slightest started to replace the words from the original texts. Surely some part of substitution still occurred due to the phonological similarity, but the tendency of the emergence of rather random words seems evident. For instance, Jaesung read *Zito* for *Pele*, *every day* for *every opponent*, and *old man* for *old games,* which are not phonologically similar but syntactically possible combination of words. Some instances of substitution even disrupted the context. Here, Jaesung seems to have looked at the preceding word and expected the next word to come out and said that word out loud. It appears to indicate that his reading passed the stage of word by word manner into the stage of predicting the following words in order to promote his reading fluency.

Still, substitution errors due to phonological similarity have occurred consistently. Since some are meaning-changing substitutions (e.g. *shoot* substituting *shout* in the 3th session) or syntactically inappropriate (e.g. *became*

substituting *because* in the 14th session), looking into the errors provide information about the reading problems that Jaesung had. Above all, this phenomenon seems to prove that Jaesung's phonological awareness was in the earlier stages, and that the opportunities to practice connecting grapheme-phoneme accurately were not provided enough. Even if Jaesung was able to self-correct the errors or quickly re-read the erroneous part, unskilled grapheme-phoneme connections would have impeded comprehension and slowed down the reading process.

Jaesung's lack of skills in grapheme-phoneme connection is more evident in the examples of mispronunciation and examiner-help. First, the case was frequently found that while Jaesung clearly knew the word, he actually did not know how to pronounce it. To continue former discussion on his pronunciation problems, typical examples included words such as *Michael, island,* and *women*. Jaesung pronounced *Michael* as *Michelle*, pronounced *island* as *Iceland*, and *women* as *woman*. It was clear from his reports that he did not substitute the former words with the latter ones, but he did not know how to pronounce them exactly. This indicates that he had rarely listened to even quite common vocabulary or paid less attention to it, and all the more that he had seldom practiced connecting letters with sounds.

Secondly, Jaesung had difficulty in reading proper nouns. *Alcatraz, Gregory,* and *Kinshasa* are proper nouns, but can be pronounced without much difficulty due to its lack of irregularities in spelling and pronunciation. However, he struggled to read these words, and in the majority of cases he was provided with

the instructor's help, being unable to manage to read it to the end. Fortunately, the difficulty of reading proper nouns seemed to be resolved as the experiment proceeded. In fact, it was Jaesung's biggest improvements. The most impressive in his performance in the 8th session was that he read the long and unfamiliar words, *Ameriquinho, Valdemar, Vasconcelos,* and *Maracana,* without any hesitation or stammering. Examining errors only might fail to provide valuable information on Jaesung's improved performance. Since all the books that Jaesung read were non-fiction and relate the lives of famous persons, the texts naturally included a lot of proper names such as of persons, places, and movies. In the latter part of the experiment, this difficulty noticeably decreased.

Meanwhile, omission (8%) and insertion (6%) rarely occurred throughout the sessions. Omission and insertion errors were found mainly in the latter half of the sessions (see Table 4.2; the inserted words were boldfaced, and the omitted words were drawn with transverse lines).

Table 4.2 Omission and Insertion Errors (Jaesung)

| Session | Original text | Jaesung's reading |
|---|---|---|
| 4 | *afraid* | *afraid **of*** (sc) |
| 6 | *be the* | *be **in** the* |
| 8 | *with his friends* | *with **the** his friends* (sc) |
| 8 | *were happy* | *were **very** happy* (sc) |
| 8 | *in Brazil* | *in **the** Brazil* (sc) |
| 8 | *Pele played* | *Pele **was** played* (sc) |
| 8 | *scored his first* | *scored ~~his~~ first* (sc) |
| 11 | *Ali didn't stop* | *Ali ~~didn't~~ stop* |
| 11 | *called to him* | *called ~~to~~ him* (sc) |
| 12 | *The A team* | *The ~~A~~ team* (sc) |
| 13 | *The Bulls are the best* | *The Bulls are ~~the~~ best* |
| 13 | *come back to* | *come ~~back~~ to* (sc) |
| 14 | *It's not a problem* | *It's ~~not~~ a problem* |
| 15 | *It's not a* | *It's ~~not~~ a* (sc) |

Generally, to imagine Jaesung's eye movement, his initial word-by-word reading manner that led to eye fixation at every single word seemed to decrease with growing fluency.

Traditionally, omission errors were seen as learners' inability to see the omitted words or simple carelessness (Spache, 1964; Harris and Sipay, 1975). Goodman and Gollasch (1980), however, suggest that the same type of errors could be indicators of learners' 'strength' (p. 18). According to the empirical studies done by these researchers, learners' non-deliberate omissions indicated their attempt to construct meaning; the sources included unpredictable elements, optional elements (e.g. determiners) prediction of other structures, etc. In fact, examples of Jaesung's insertion errors and some of the omission errors seem to result from the prediction of certain structures (e.g. *afraid of* instead of *afraid*, *come to* instead of *come back to*). As Goodman and Gollasch (1980) claim,

Jaesung's errors might indicate his growing competence in reading.

## 4.2.3. Reading Comprehension

Although Jaesung was quite skilled in rapidly and automatically recognizing words from level 2 texts, his instructional level texts, he had difficulty in understanding the same texts. There is a clear difference in retell scores between level 1 and level 2 texts (see Table 4.3). The sample retell produced by Jaesung is provided in Appendix E.

Table 4.3 Retell Score (Jaesung)

| | | 2nd | 3rd | 4th | 5th | 6th | 7th | 8th | 9th | 10th | 11th | 12th | 13th | 14th | 15th |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Text** | | Extreme Sports | | | Audrey Hepburn | | | Pele | | Muhammad Ali | | Michael Jordan | | Audrey Hepburn | |
| **Level** | | Lv. 2 | | | Lv. 2 | | | Lv. 1 | | Lv. 1 | | Lv. 1 | | Lv. 2 | |
| **Score** | 1st | 4 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 4 |
| | 2nd | 3 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 1 | 2 |

In fact, Jaesung looked extremely pressured while reading *Audrey Hepburn*, so it was recommended that he adjust the level of reading materials. Later, he stated that *Audrey Hepburn* was the most difficult text as can be seen from the lower scores in those sessions. He reported that difficulties were due to the specific words that were particularly hard for him to read:

Excerpt 4.7. Names. (..) Long sentences and those symbols like minus or

fractional numbers. (Jaesung's Interview Quote, Session 16)

These words appeared more frequently in level 2 texts. Moreover, storybooks can be said to contain more informal expressions like phrasal verbs or colloquial expressions than those in the textbook used in school, especially in the conversation part. These could have influenced the difficulty that Jaesung felt while reading.

For example, Jaesung felt it hard to picture the scenes described as following:

1) *Michael took Gareth's arms in his hands and pulled him around.* (Session 2, *Extreme Sports*)

2) *In smaller caves, each diver puts down a line so he or she can get back again.* (Session 3, *Extreme Sports*)

3) *He made a different cheap, black and white movie with no world-famous actors. (..) He was wrong about his new movie. Its name was Psycho. But he was right about the second thing..* (Session 7, *Audrey Hepburn*)

The uses of prepositions (e.g. *put 'down,' pull 'around'*) and unfamiliar expressions (e.g. *get back*, *with no world-famous*, *was right about*) must have caused difficulty to Jaesung, so additional explanation had to be provided from the instructor in order to help Jaesung understand the situation in the story.

In the 13th session, he suddenly stated that those times while reading *Audrey Hepburn* were hard for him for several reasons (see Excerpt 4.8).

Excerpt 4.8. I performed poorly at that time. I was out of my mind. (..) I was busy with *hakwon*, and I was ill and had insomnia even. (Jaesung's Interview Quote, Session 13)

After all, Jaesung's poor performance, especially in the 7th session was due to specific situations during that time, not just because of the text difficulty. Thus, in the last two sessions attempts were made to go back to the problematic *Audrey Hepburn*. However, he had similar problems when reading *Audrey Hepburn* again in the 14th session, and he responded lightheartedly, "Maybe Audrey Hepburn has bad feelings for me" (session 16). It was clear that level 2 texts indicated instructional level for Jaesung, as revealed in his fluent and accurate reading with only minor changes. Yet, level 1 texts, his independent level texts, seemed more appropriate as his reading materials, since learners' motivation is of utmost importance in selecting materials. Text difficulty is one of the factors that could affect learners' motivation. If maintaining learners' motivation is given priority, level 2 texts may be less appropriate than level 1 texts, since poor performance in comprehension while reading level 2 texts could have affected Jaesung's motivation.

Another aspect that stood out was that Jaesung mentioned a lot of detailed information when retelling the story. For example, in every session Jaesung made a good guess of the exact date of events, which was most of the time accurate. Below is one of those cases where Jaesung was particularly focused on remembering in what years Pele did something, which turned out to be one

hundred percent accurate:

**Original Text**: They won the Brazil Championship in 1961, 1962, 1963, 1964, and 1965. They won the South American Club in 1962, 1963, and 1968.

**Jaesung's Retell**: And they won the championships in the following years. In 1961, 1962, 1963, 1964, and 1965. And in the world championship in 1962 and 1963. And in 1968.

At first, Jaesung was thought to have a sophisticated memory. However, it would be more accurate to say that he was particularly interested in remembering the details. As can be seen from the above example, he was more interested in the exact years than describing how Santos won many different championships. The instructor advised Jaesung several times to be less attentive to the details, lest he miss main events. However, Jaesung seemed to enjoy correctly guessing such information all the way, despite the concerns.

In addition, Jaesung remembered each sentence piece by piece and retold what he remembered as it was, but the whole flow of content was not well organized. Sometimes, the story was retold with the sequence of each event mixed up. Example retells were presented below:

1) Session 4, Extreme Sports

**Original Text:** In big caves, the instructors put lines in the water. Each line is a different color. The lines stay there all the time and they help the divers. In smaller caves, each diver puts down a line so he or she can get back again.

**Jaesung's Retell:** There is this line. What is it? Ah! The colors change. Sea colors change. Isn't it? I don't know. The lines do something.


2) Session 7, Audrey Hepburn

**Original Text**: After Green Mansions, she became pregnant. Mel wanted her to stay at home, but she went to Mexico. In the middle of the movie, *The Unforgiven*, she had an accident.

**Jaesung's Retell**: She made a movie. The movie was *The Unforgiven*. (Being confused with the earlier part of the story) She took her husband and her dog. She suddenly hates her husband.


Since level 1 texts were comprised of short and simple sentences, there appeared fewer problems of this type. However, level 2 texts required more clear understanding of the sequence of each event and the relationships between them, so Jaesung often felt lost while retelling the story, left only with fragmentary pieces of information. Those retells were scored as weak comprehension (0 or 1).

Fortunately, chunking was quite helpful to solve the above problem. Jaesung started to recognize each passage as one unit, and he seemed to internalize through the feedback of the instructor the importance of organizing the contents, thus

remembering the central idea of each passage while reading (see Excerpt 4.9 and Excerpt 4.10).

Excerpt 4.9. Before moving on, I remember the previous story. (..) I pause a lot so I can remember the content. (Jaesung's Interview Quote, Session 5)

Excerpt 4.10. I think it's important to remember the most important sentence in a passage. It works that way because I can weave them into the story. (Jaesung's Interview Quote, Session 16)

In addition to the fact that he scored high in 5th session, it seems to be a great achievement for Jaesung to be able to explain how to better understand the content for himself.

In Jaesung's case, it is worth noticing that his comprehension was often interrupted while reading level 2 texts even though he was generally accurate and fluent in his reading performance. His case clearly shows that mere word reading does not lead to genuine understanding of the texts.

# CHAPTER 5.
# BECOMING A SELF-PACED AND FLUENT READER: THE CASE OF EUNWOO

In Chapter 5, the case of Eunwoo is delineated and discussed in terms of his responses to OR instruction and changes in reading rate, accuracy, and comprehension. Section 5.1 discusses the characteristics of Eunwoo's overall reading behaviors during the OR practice along with his thoughts and opinions on the experience. In Section 5.2, Eunwoo's reading rate, accuracy, and comprehension measured each session are presented and analyzed respectively.

## 5.1. Eunwoo's OR Experience during the Instruction

Eunwoo reported that the most significant improvement was in his word reading skills. During the assignment review, Eunwoo showed a variety of both verbal and nonverbal responses to his own reading. He giggled (session 7), frowned (session 12), and evaluated his reading with comments. The giggling and frowning were the reactions to his errors, and sometimes he gave comments as in "I thought I read it well, but now that I listen to it, there are lots of mistakes" (session 3). When he made fewer errors, he praised himself, saying that "I think I read it better than last time" (session 4). As can be seem from his reaction, Eunwoo mainly focused on accuracy in reviewing the assignments. He realized that he frequently substituted a word with another phonologically

similar word, and reminded himself of his being confused in that aspect. He also asked questions on how to pronounce specific words. Then, his pronunciation was corrected, or the strategies were taught, mostly of segmenting the words into syllable units. During the second half of the assignment he recorded the same text twice. He stated that the second version was always better than the first one because there were fewer errors, and he could read faster (session 10).

Therefore, modeling was most meaningful to Eunwoo in that the instructor demonstrated first how to pronounce the words from the text correctly before he read (see Excerpt 5.1). In fact, Eunwoo had noticed the variation of intonation in the instructor's reading in the 2nd session. When asked "What do you think does stand out in the instructor's modeling?" he briefly answered: "Intonation?" Yet when asked to elaborate, he stated that it was hard for him to explain. It was expected that Eunwoo would pay more attention to prosodic features. However, it was never mentioned afterwards, and modeling almost exclusively served the function of teaching how to pronounce words.

Excerpt 5.1. It is easier (to read). I get hints on the words that I don't know, and even if I do know specific words, I often forget. But soon I suddenly remember while listening. (Eunwoo's Interview Quote, Session 2)

He sometimes read along subvocally while listening as if to remember the pronunciation. Since he was focused on how to pronounce individual words, after modeling began to be provided passage by passage, he reported that some

words at the earlier part were soon forgotten. In fact, some words, even if modeled by the instructor, were frequently mispronounced. Such a case reveals that Eunwoo's lack of phonological awareness led him to forget how to pronounce what he heard a moment ago.

For example, Eunwoo failed to correctly pronounce *quiet* (session 1), *Mrs.* (session 4), and *laugh* (session 13) even after the instructor provided modeling first. He encountered *quiet* in the 1st session, and pronounced it the same way as *quite*. However, he knew exactly what the word meant; he gave the right answer to the instructor's question on its meaning. This example shows that even if he knew the meaning of the word, he was unaware of how to pronounce it and had never been corrected. As for *Mrs.*, he had no idea what it meant, except that it comes in front of people's names. It goes without saying that he did not know how to read it. The instructor spent time explaining the different uses of *Mrs.*, *Mr.*, and *Miss* and the pronunciation of each word. Lastly, *laugh* reminded him of a specific action of a person, so he tried to remember the exact meaning of the word. He tried the meaning of *shout*, *yell*, and *speak* one by one. When the instructor taught him its meaning, he shouted 'Ah!' and seemed to have remembered it that moment. Eunwoo must have encountered the word *laugh* several times, since, like the other two words, *laugh* is a high frequency word. Leaving the meaning aside, he did not know its pronunciation in the slightest. He pronounced it as [laud], being unable to recall the fact that *gh* is pronounced as [f] whenever it appears in the final position of words.

The above phenomena seem to indicate that Eunwoo had paid less attention

to the pronunciation of words. Cases like above were not common during the instruction for sure, since after all he could read a narrative text on his own without much difficulty. Still, a few instances might be the tip of an iceberg; there could be lots of words that he had learned but had not been acquainted with the sound value that they carry. Until he read aloud the words, he was unaware that he was unable to read them aloud correctly. Then, naturally he would not have been able to recognize those words when he had heard them.

Impressively, it was found that Eunwoo rehearsed text reading several times before sending the recorded files to the instructor (see Excerpt 5.2).

Excerpt 5.2. When I make lots of errors, I start over. (..) If there are some strange or difficult words. (..) I make an effort. (Eunwoo's Interview Quote, Session 8)

Eunwoo also mentioned that he looked up the NAVER dictionary and listened to the pronunciation when he was not sure about his pronunciation of specific words. The instructor never advised or recommended him to do so. As he said, he was putting efforts into the assignment; he invested time and effort in reading words correctly. When it comes to mere mistakes, such as substitution or omission, unless it occurred repeatedly or influenced comprehension of the content, it was not explicitly corrected. Most of the time, however, he noticed that he made mistakes, and self-corrected them. Sometimes, he repeated the parts that included such mistakes, being conscious of his initial misreading.

Meanwhile, Eunwoo reported that the most memorable instruction was chunking, just like Jaesung did. Eunwoo, like Jaesung, had a clear tendency to read texts in a word-by-word manner. Since he did not give pauses properly, he found it difficult to breathe while reading (see Excerpt 5.3)

Excerpt 5.3. It's hard to breathe. (..) There is this timing when you feel like you should not breathe after reading a paragraph. I think I should continue reading without being cut off and if I stop there it feels wrong, so I can't breathe. (Eunwoo's Interview Quote, Session 2)

As revealed in the above excerpt, Eunwoo seemed to think that it was important to read quickly and fluently. Because of that, however, he could not pause when necessary, thereby missing the timing to breathe. A similar comment was made in the 5th session again.

Excerpt 5.4. I should read a sentence smoothly and then pause when necessary, but right now I am concentrating on each word so if a sentence doesn't end I stop awkwardly. (Eunwoo's Interview Quote, Session 5)

As the comment indicates, Eunwoo was well aware that he was concentrating on every single word. He felt it hard to find the right timing to pause and breathe.

Accordingly, from the 7th session Eunwoo was instructed to read a text by grouping words into meaningful units. It seemed clear that Eunwoo had never

been engaged in such practice before, since he asked the instructor what meaningful units were. He was taught through modeling how to chunk words into meaningful units. As chunking began to be discussed during the experiment, he started to notice that there were chunking problems in his own reading.

After the instruction, self-correction on chunking increased noticeably from the 8th session. When he did not give a pause where he should have, he went back, correctly paused a while, and then continued reading. When asked from time to time to analyze a sentence for practice, he successfully grouped words into meaningful units. He quickly understood what meaningful units were, and had no difficulty in grouping words based on the meaning. However, as he admitted, chunking and reading aloud simultaneously was not an easy task. Nonetheless, he definitely seemed to become more adept in reading relatively longer and more complicated sentences. The breathing problem was resolved in no time.

When asked why he thought chunking was important, Eunwoo replied:

Excerpt 5.5. To speak well. (..) to find the timing to breathe (Eunwoo's Interview Quote, Session 16)

This comment confirms again that his difficulty in breathing early in the experiment was due to his lack of understanding on how to read a text fluently with appropriate pauses.

It also turned out in another comment from the last session that Eunwoo was

impressed by chunking practice and realized the importance of it (see Excerpt 5.6).

Excerpt 5.6. I thought that I should be careful with this as in reading a sentence like 'My father entered the room.' (Eunwoo's Interview Quote, Session 16)

The sentence mentioned by Eunwoo can be interpreted with two different meanings depending on how one pauses between the syllables in Korean: 'My father went into the room' or 'My father went into the bag.' The above example mentioned by Eunwoo shows that he clearly understood that appropriate chunking in meaningful units was directly related to understanding of the content.

Another noticeable behavioral aspect of Eunwoo at the beginning of the experiment was that he pointed at the text with his finger while he was reading (see Excerpt 5.7). From the 1st session when the level test was conducted, the instructor had already paid attention to this gesture.

Excerpt 5.7. I'm a bit confused when I read the next line. (..) Yes, I do that often with a pencil. (Eunwoo's Interview Quote, Session 1)

This behavior was frequently observed at earlier sessions. This habitual action was not maintained throughout his reading of one text; sometimes he first read the text indicating each word with his finger, and then stopped using his finger in

the middle, and other times he suddenly started to use his finger in the middle of reading.

But exactly after 7th session, this behavior has completely disappeared. Asked if space between the lines were too narrow, Eunwoo had replied that it was ok, that it did not matter. Thus, it is believed that this behavior was more due to his psychological problems rather than influenced by physical factors, as the occurences of the behavior were quite sudden and irregular.

In this respect, Eunwoo was asked several times about the meanings implied in this action, and based on his responses two possible reasons were drawn as follows. First, as noted in Excerpt 5.8, Eunwoo pointed to each word to be read with a finger to better concentrate on the act of reading.

Excerpt 5.8. It was to try to concentrate on reading. (..) When I read in Korean, I underline the text often. Feels a bit like that. (Eunwoo's Interview Quote, Session 3)

In fact, in the 1st session, Eunwoo had already mentioned that it was a habit of his own to read pointing with a pencil. It seemed to be a quite difficult task for Eunwoo to pay full attention on pages filled with numerous words and to process them skillfully. Accordingly he used his finger when he felt that he was not concentrating enough on the text, and when he was well focused, he stopped the action in question. The 4th session found little of this behavior from Eunwoo. When asked why, he replied as follows:

Excerpt 5.9. I can read well this way. If I skip the next paragraph, (..) I do this often when reading books in Korean, so I read this way from time to time. Once or twice I miss the next line, but today there was nothing like that. (Eunwoo's interview quote, Session 4)

After the 4th session, the hand gesture was sometimes employed, but constant practice to read aloud seems to have helped him to better concentrate on the texts, thereby that behavior becoming unnecessary.

The second reason is related to the nervousness that Eunwoo felt. When asked why he was using his finger at the beginning of the 3rd session, Eunwoo replied with a single word "nervousness." When asked why he stopped doing it, he answered as in the following two excerpts, full of confidence:

Excerpt 5.10. I think I am good at this. (Eunwoo's Interview Quote, Session 10)

Excerpt 5.11. That's right. I am so good at this. (Eunwoo's Interview Quote, Session 16)

These comments confirm that Eunwoo, who was very conscious of and nervous about reading slowly and laboriously in general or more specifically jumping over a line, started to feel confident and read more comfortably.

Despite all the above difficulties, Eunwoo retold the story quite accurately and answered almost every comprehension question during the instruction.

Actually, during the stage of modeling and practice, discussion about content was placed an emphasis. For better understanding, some key words were taught explicitly, but not minor words. Towards the end of the experiment Eunwoo was asked to infer the meaning of some words based on the context, and though most attempts missed the mark, he learned not to be helpless in front of the words that he did not know. Instead, he learned to rely on the context for comprehension. Once, he brilliantly inferred the meaning of *sleds*, even though he has never seen the word before, on which the instructor enthusiastically praised Eunwoo (session 14).

In the last session, Eunwoo delivered his thoughts towards the last 14-session experience of OR practice based on the semi-structured questionnaire (see Appendix F). After filling in the questionnaire, the instructor played two recorded files of his first and last assignment consecutively. After listening to the two files, Eunwoo responded as follows:

Excerpt 5.12. I got better! (..) (Initially) It was hard to move to the next passage. (..) I was slow in reading the passages smoothly, and words too. When I was not sure about some part, there was a long delay. (Eunwoo's Interview Quote, Session 16)

Adding "I didn't know that I improved this much," he expressed surprise. The amazement was also the instructor's. Eunwoo became a fluent reader before both knew it. He did not read sentences in a word-by-word manner any longer.

Reading rate increased, and comprehensibility improved. It was hard to notice the difference between sessions, but truly there was a significant change when compared to the very first time.

Fortunately, Eunwoo had little trouble with reading materials that he selected even though this experience was new to him in that he had not read books that much before. Level 1 texts suited him, so he improved a lot while reading them, and could go on to the level 2 text without much difficulty. When reading *White Fang*, Eunwoo stated that it was a little difficult, but still he could read it (session 15).

As for the future practice, Eunwoo was not sure about whether he would have to read orally. Eunwoo marked 5 on a scale of one to nine about the likelihood that he would be engaged in OR practice in the future. However, like Jaesung, Eunwoo associated OR practice with speaking skills as well.

Excerpt 5.13. Seeing the words, and reading them aloud. It's like taking first steps (for speaking). (Eunwoo's Interview Quote, Session 16)

As can be seen in the Excerpt 5.13, Eunwoo appeared to think that OR was helpful in improving speaking skills. Then, he added that he would feel confident both in the speaking test and in reading the textbook aloud during class in the future.

## 5.2. Diagnosis of Eunwoo's OR Performance

During the Phase 3, where Eunwoo read aloud alone, his reading rate was measured and decoding errors were analyzed. Then his immediate oral retell was evaluated using a holistic rubric. The following subsections report the findings and discuss each element one by one.

### 5.2.1. Reading Rate

Initially, Eunwoo was a highly slow and laborious reader. He read the text in a word-by-word manner, and the reading rate was approximately 60 words per minute or less. Yet through repeated practice, he started to slowly pull up his reading rate and reached almost 80 words per minute in the end. The reading rate of Eunwoo throughout the 14 sessions is presented in the figure below.
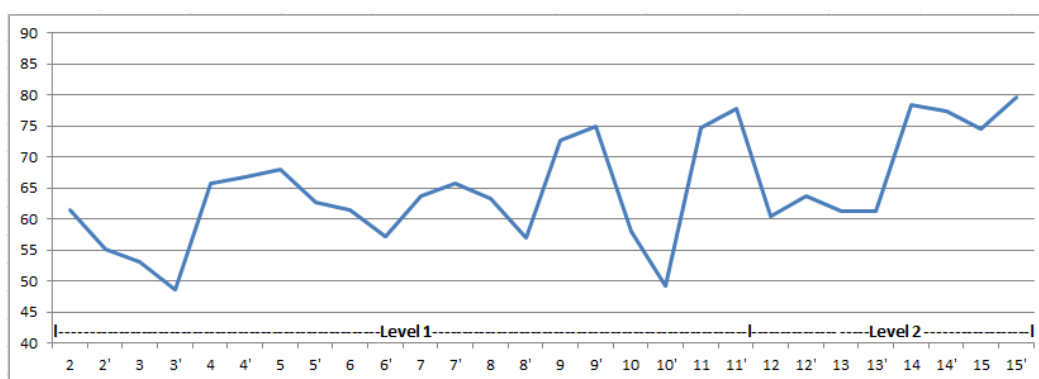


Figure 5.1. Reading Rate (Eunwoo)

Eunwoo went through three times of huge decline in his reading rate. First, around the beginning of the experiment, the reading rate of the 3rd session dropped below 50 words per minute. In the previous modeling before he read alone, Eunwoo felt confused about the three words, *was, were,* and *where*, made several mistakes, and eventually was provided with examiner-help. Being highly conscious of repeated decoding errors, Eunwoo said to himself that *where* and *were* were problematic. He commented as follows:

Excerpt 5.14. The two words are similar because both have *ere*. I need to be careful. (Eunwoo's interview quote, Session 3)

After that, while reading aloud alone in the 3rd session, Eunwoo read the text noticeably slowly, which caused decoding errors to be less than usual, but the rate to drop to less than 50 words per minute. In the 3rd session, the instructor also pointed out his confusion between *want* and *went* during the assignment review. Eunwoo seemed too conscious of consecutive error corrections. To reflect upon the instructor's role again, the instructor decided not to correct Eunwoo's decoding errors as much as possible.

The 10th session witnessed the second sharp drop in reading rate. In this session, he encountered a rather short text that consists of 227 words, which, however, included a number of difficult and unfamiliar proper nouns that had not appeared before. The words in question are *North Carolina, Chapel Hill, Dean Smith, Roslyn, Tar Heels, (Georgetown) Hoyas,* and *New Orleans. Georgetown*

*Hoyas* was shortened to *Hoyas* in the latter two times, and most of the words appeared more than twice. These names of the new character, unfamiliar basketball team and city caused great difficulty for Eunwoo. While and after reading, he gave the following comments.

Excerpt 5.15. (After reading three passages) It's difficult.

Excerpt 5.16. (After reading one more sentence) Why is it so difficult?

Excerpt 5.17. (On finishing reading) It was too difficult. It was exhausting.

(Eunwoo's interview quote, Session 10)

These excerpts clearly show how difficult he felt while reading the given text. During the 16 sessions, there were no occasions that he expressed such difficulty as this instance.

Finally, steadily increasing reading rate declined drastically in the 12th session for the following two reasons. First, the 12th session was the day that Eunwoo first took a risk with reading level 2 text. Naturally, the vocabulary became difficult, the sentence structure complex, and the content itself more complicated. Second, due to personal reasons, Eunwoo had a ten-day term between the 11th and 12th session. These two reasons seem to have affected the decline in reading rate.

Yet Eunwoo soon regained his pace and established the best record consecutively during the 14-15th session. The last reading yielded 79.73 words per minute, which was more meaningful because Eunwoo had set the goal of reaching 80 words per minute for himself in the 8th session.

Actually, Eunwoo never sticked to reading fast. In the 7th session, the instructor gave feedback that his reading speed was improved, with the intention of motivating him more, but Eunwoo replied detachedly that moderate speed was the best. In the 12th session, he first encountered level 2 text and accordingly had difficulty understanding the contents, but he wisely slowed down his reading, focusing on complete understanding, and later commented as follows:

Excerpt 5.18. Reading slower helps to comprehend better.

Excerpt 5.19. It is good to read slowly.

(Eunwoo's interview quote, Session 12)

As can be seen, Eunwoo conducted OR while concentrating on comprehension rather than speed.

Regarding his own feelings towards his reading speed, Eunwoo said that he thought his reading rate was slower than moderate. When asked to evaluate his reading rate in the 8th session, he placed the score at 4 or 4.5 on a scale of one to nine. Eunwoo was a participant who frequently reflected on his own reading behaviors, and when asked about his thoughts on reading rate, he replied:

Excerpt 5.20. I think that there's this thing. (..) For the easier part, I can read through the text smoothly, but if pronunciation of specific parts confuses me, I get stuck. (..) When I get stuck I hesitate a while. (..) There's ups and downs. (Eunwoo's interview quote, Session 8)

Nonetheless, it seems to be a great achievement that Eunwoo could read as rapidly as he did in the last session even though he was rarely conscious of increasing his own reading rate. His lowest reading rate was 48.61 words per minute in the 3rd session, and before he knew it, he became a reader who could read almost 80 words per minute.

## 5.2.2. Reading Accuracy

During the 14-session experiment, Eunwoo made 180 decoding errors in total. Substitution accounted for the largest portions (81%), followed by examiner-help (9%), mispronunciation (7%), omission (1%), and insertion (1%). Table 5.1 shows the proportions of decoding errors made by Eunwoo. See Appendix G for a list of all decoding errors. Also, note that around 46% of the total decoding errors were self-corrected.

Table 5.1. The Frequency and Percentage of Decoding Errors (Eunwoo)

| Session | M* | S | O | I | EH | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2nd | 2 (0.5%) | 14 [9]** (3.2%) | | | | 16 [9] (3.7%) |
| 3rd | 2 (0.5%) | 8 [3] (1.8%) | | | | 10 [3] (2.3%) |
| 4th | | 6 [4] (1.3%) | | | 2 (0.4%) | 8 [4] (1.7%) |
| 5th | | 8 [7] (1.7%) | | 1 (0.2%) | 2 (0.4%) | 11 [8] (2.3%) |
| 6th | | 10 [6] (2.2%) | | | 1 (0.2%) | 11 [6] (2.4%) |
| 7th | 1 (0.2%) | 10 [4] (2.1%) | | | 2 (0.4%) | 13 [4] (2.8%) |
| 8th | | 9 [5] (2.5%) | | | 2 (0.5%) | 11 [5] (3.0%) |
| 9th | | 5 [2] (0.9%) | | | 2 (0.4%) | 7 [2] (1.3%) |
| 10th | 3 (0.6%) | 14 [8] (3.0%) | | | 6 (1.3%) | 23 [8] (4.9%) |
| 11st | 1 (0.2%) | 5 [5] (1.1%) | 1 (0.2%) | | | 7 [5] (1.6%) |
| 12st | 2 (0.4%) | 21 [7] (4.3%) | | | | 23 [7] (4.7%) |
| 13st | 2 (0.4%) | 12 [8] (2.6%) | | | | 14 [8] (3.1%) |
| 14th | | 12 [4] (2.4%) | 1 [1] (0.2%) | | | 13 [5] (2.6%) |
| 15th | | 13 [9] (2.4%) | | | | 13 [9] (2.4%) |
| Total | 13 (7%) | 146 (81%) | 2 (1%) | 1 (0.5%) | 17 (9%) | |

* M: mispronunciation, S: substitution, O: omission, I: insertion, EH: examiner-help
** []: the number of self-correction


    Of various error types, substitution accounted for overwhelmingly high percentage. Eunwoo had difficulty pronouncing new words or proper nouns as well, but mispronunciation or examiner-help was found much less than

substitution. This would be probably because the selected books were mostly narratives, which include a limited number of character names or other proper nouns.

The substitution errors occurred constantly throughout the experiment, although there were fluctuations in the later sessions. The first thing that stands out is the substitutions among the words that begin with *w*. In fact these substitution errors occurred frequently during the assignment and the instruction phase as well. Such words include *walk, work, were, where, wait, want, with* and *was* (see Table 5.2).

Table 5.2 Examples of the Substitution between Words Starting with *w* (Eunwoo)

| Original texts | Eunwoo's reading |
|----------------|------------------|
| *walk* | *work* |
| *were* | *where* |
| *waited* | *wanted* |
| *went* | *wanted* |
| *wanted* | *want* |
| *want* | *was* |
| *wasn't* | *want* |

The confusion between these words occurred mainly in the earlier part of the experiment, and such errors were later found only once or twice per session. Given that the above words frequently appear in most texts, it can be inferred that the reduction of the error would have little correlation with the frequency of these words in the text. Rather, this might prove that Eunwoo's confusion about these words has diminished. It was in the 3rd session that the instructor provided

feedback on this type of substitution errors (See Excerpt 5.14). In the 16th session, Eunwoo took examples of *were* and *where* as the most memorable words that the instructor gave feedback on, since he clearly knew that he was particularly struggling with those errors. Eunwoo's substitution errors occurred due to various reasons such as phonological similarity and confusion between different propositions. However, it is likely that the decline of this specific type of error was due to the feedback from the instructor and the washback effect thereof.

The second thing that draws attention is the confusion between the present and past form of the verb. A total of twenty-three related errors occurred during fourteen sessions. In addition, it is not only caused by omitting the past tense suffix *ed*, but more errors are found in irregular past forms (17 out of 23). The following is a list with regular forms on the left and irregular ones on the right.

Table 5.3. Substitution with Verb Forms (Eunwoo)

| Regular past tense verbs | |
|---|---|
| Original texts | Eunwoo's reading |
| *talk* | *talk* |
| *liked* | *like* |
| *want* | *wanted* |
| *wanted* | *wants* |
| *visits* | *visited* |
| *listen* | *listened* |

| Irregular past tense verbs | |
|---|---|
| Original texts | Eunwoo's reading |
| *do* | *did* |
| *come* | *came (3)* |
| *came* | *come* |
| *says* | *said* |
| *slept* | *sleep* |
| *caught* | *catch* |
| *ate* | *eat* |
| *knew* | *know* |
| *bite* | *bit (2)* |
| *met* | *meet* |
| *understand* | *understood* |
| *knew* | *know* |
| *took* | *take* |

Although irregular past forms contain some degree of phonological similarity, substitutions between irregular past forms clearly show that Eunwoo was at the beginning stages of processing accurate forms of verbs; that is, of making accurate choices between the stems and their inflected counterparts. According to Matthews and Theakston (2006), this kind of phenomenon is found in the cases of younger learners, who have not yet developed the ability to inflect productively, and their choice is thought to be affected by the frequency in learners' schemata (p. 1028). More practice and experience of producing verb forms appeared to be needed for Eunwoo.

Lastly, Eunwoo's insufficient phonological awareness caused problems as discussed in the previous section. He failed to correctly pronounce words such as *tore, trial,* and *retire*, and was frequently stuck for a moment when encountered with larger numbers or proper nouns such as *Douglas, Maracana,* and *Georgetown*. He hesitated in front of such words, and often looked up the instructor asking for help. The instructor provided help thereon, and advised him not to be discouraged and just read them confidently. Accordingly, Eunwoo never gave up, and managed to read them on his own with no examiner-help provided during the 11th-15th session.

Unlike Jaesung, however, Eunwoo made few omission and insertion errors. This indicates that he was at the stage of paying almost equal attention to every word he saw in the given text.

## 5.2.3. Reading Comprehension

As can be seen from Table 5.4 below, Eunwoo retold the story accurately and fluently throughout the experiment, based on thorough understanding of the content of the given text. The sample retell produced by Eunwoo is provided in Appendix H.

Table 5.4 Retell Score (Eunwoo)

| Session | | 2nd | 3rd | 4th | 5th | 6th | 7th | 8th | 9th | 10th | 11th | 12th | 13th | 14th | 15th |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Text | | The Adventure of Tom Sawyer | | | | Pele | | The Missing Coins | | Michael Jordan | | White Fang | | | |
| Level | | Lv. 1 | | | | Lv. 1 | | Lv. 1 | | Lv. 1 | | Lv. 2 | | | |
| Score | 1st | 5 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 4 |
| | 2nd | 4 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 |

Occasionally he achieved partial comprehension, resulting in 3 point. The majority of difficulties lay in vocabulary. It was found that he did not know what *tear, trial* (session 3) and *injury* (session 4) meant. Yet he was not puzzled or stuck at the moment. Instead, he relied on the context, and inferred what was happening in the story as much as he could, thus his overall comprehension unaffected. Meanwhile, a substitution error occurred in the 2nd session. Eunwoo read *walk* as *work*, and misunderstood its meaning therewith. Even if the word in question was of little importance in grasping the main idea of the texts that Eunwoo read, such a case reveals how substitution errors could affect reading comprehension. Attempting to read a level 2 text first brought some difficulties to Eunwoo. Nonetheless, he soon achieved higher level of comprehension by slowing down his reading. Eunwoo appeared to feel little discomfort in reading aloud and understanding the text simultaneously.

Above all, Eunwoo was a reader who related much to the stories. He enjoyed reading and basically pursued following the storyline, although he paid parts of his attention to accuracy or fluency. When he read *White Fang*, he frequently

commented on how the young wolf, the main character of the story, was cute or pitiful, and showed great interest in how the story would unfold, being curious about the ending. His case clearly shows that consistent meaning-based OR practice could contribute to developing overall reading abilities including rate, accuracy, fluency, and comprehension.

# CHAPTER 6.
# DISCUSSION

This chapter provides a detailed analysis of key research findings presented in chapter 4 and 5, with reference to each of the research questions. The results of the study are also discussed in relation to previous research studies. The first section (Section 6.1) discusses the emerging issues related to the process of the participants' reading development and their behavioral characteristics during the OR instruction. Section 6.2 presents how the participants' reading performance developed throughout the experiment, in terms of reading rate, accuracy, and comprehension.

## 6.1. Participants' Reading Behaviors during the Instruction

The first research question required the close observation of the participants' OR experience so the present study could provide specific information on how they responded to OR practice and perceived the whole procedure.

The similarities between the two participants were in lack of their reading skills. First, OR instruction brought both the students' and the instructor's attention to word decoding, the most basic skill for reading. Initially, both Jaesung and Eunwoo had hard times in matching graphemes to their phonemes as clearly revealed in their reading of some proper nouns or even common vocabulary of

which pronunciation they had been unfamiliar with. The difficulties that second language learners like Jaesung and Eunwoo have in decoding skills have been frequently noted by numerous researchers (Anderson, 1999; Gorsuch & Taguchi, 2008, 2010; Grabe & Stoller, 2013; Koda, 1996), and the challenges facing them were often attributed to limited L2 input sources (Gebhard, 1996; Redfield, 1999). Since both participants had never been engaged in any reading activities aside from school work, additional input and practice seemed to be needed. As it turned out in the previous chapters, they endeavored to read some challenging words for them and gradually seemed to become skillful in sounding out the words, though continuing efforts will be required in the future. The participants came to realize that they had lacked phonological awareness, after the experience of feeling confused with how to pronounce words that they have known for a long time.

Moving towards a larger unit of language, the participants were also found to be unaware of appropriate chunking. Their word-by-word reading manner clearly manifested their reading without giving any pauses when necessary. Especially Jaesung struggled for quite a while to figure out the tasks. Poor skills in grouping words into chunks have been pointed out as one of the major problems that lower-level readers have (Casteel, 1988; Rasinski, 2010; Rasinski & Nageldinger, 2016; Samuels, 2002), especially lower-level L2 learners (Dhaif, 1990; Yamashita & Ichikawa, 2010). Since chunking is closely related to the problem of comprehension, their word-by-word reading performance calls for more attention to the issue.

Meanwhile, the participants' overall confidence in reading texts increased

significantly. Since both participants had rarely read anything out loud in front of others before, they expressed some extent of both embarrassment and nervousness at first. Over time, however, they became used to performing OR, and started to perceive their own improvements as well. The changes of their attitude are worth noticing in that reading became something that they came to be better at than before, and in that they were no longer discouraged nor anxious about the activity. This reminds one of the importance of experiencing success in reading for promoting more reading from the learners (Hurst et al., 2011; Rasinski & Nageldinger, 2016).

However, the participants were both skeptical about the chances of being engaged in OR practice in the future. This response is likely to be due to the current implementation of English education that they have been experiencing. In other words, OR had been rarely used throughout their English learning history, and accordingly they seemed to think that such opportunities would be limited in the future as well. However, as Jaesung mentioned, OR could be conducted as an individual practice. Yet, it should be remembered that modeling plays a significant role in promoting and enhancing students' OR, and that the students must be provided with various resources that they could resort to.

In addition, both participants seemed to associate OR practice with speaking practice. Rasinski (2010) noted that OR connects spoken and written language, helping students see the relationship between the two. Kailani (1998) also claimed that OR could improve students' oral communication skills (p. 288). Though its transfer to speaking skills was not included as a focus of the study, the fact that the

two participants perceived its connection is inspirational and calls for future examination on the issue.

Differences between Jaesung and Eunwoo existed as well. First, Jaesung was relatively obsessed with reading rapidly while Eunwoo was satisfied with moderate reading rate. In this case, Jaesung seemed to have been affected by American TV dramas where all the actors speak so quickly that it was almost incomprehensible, which Jaesung would have thought was real, natural, and fluent language use.

Secondly, there was huge difference between the two participants in terms of text comprehension. While Eunwoo was quite enjoying reading stories and rather immersed in understanding the content itself, Jaesung was less inclined to focus on meaning, which might be probably related to his particular interest in reading rapidly that was mentioned above. Since the instructor conducted ongoing check on comprehension during the entire session, Jaesung started to believe that reading comprehension should be prioritized and thus that he had to concentrate more on meaning.

Lastly, the influence of reading materials needs to be discussed. Vocabulary and formality of the texts varied much across the genres, and needless to say the difficulty of the text greatly influenced the participants' performance. Eunwoo's texts were level-appropriate for him and contained mostly simple vocabulary, but those of Jaesung were full of all kinds of proper nouns and numbers that were hard for him to read at a look. It seemed to be clear that reading materials should serve fundamentally as a motive for the participants to continue reading. Jaesung, who

demonstrated fluctuating responses towards each text, participated more enthusiastically while reading *Pele* and accordingly performed superbly because soccer was his favorite to discuss and eventually to read about.

Despite somewhat different responses to OR instruction, the experience appeared to provide the participants with opportunities to examine their own reading performance, feel the needs to improve on specific aspects, and exert efforts in persistent practice.

## 6.2. Participants' Reading Development

The second research question was to examine how the participants' reading abilities develop over time. The present study placed main focus on measuring reading rate, accuracy, and comprehension.

When it comes to reading rate, both participants showed significant improvements over the 14-session experiment, though occasional decreases were observed due to various factors. The range of Jaesung's reading rate was approximately between 70 to 100 words per minute, and that of Eunwoo's was about between 50 to 80 words per minute. Lower rates were found when the participants encountered words that were tricky for them to read. Those words included proper nouns, larger numbers, or relatively unfamiliar vocabulary to them. Apart from vocabulary problems, the participants became skillful in rapid and automatic word recognition.

It should be noted that achievements of higher speed were not particularly

requested, though the participants were aware that their reading rate was being measured. Yet, information on their progress was occasionally imparted, and interestingly each participant reacted to it in different ways. Jaesung was highly conscious of reading rate, and seemed to try to shorten the time spent reading the given texts. On the contrary, Eunwoo remained indifferent to increasing reading rate, claiming several times that moderate speed was the best. In fact, this is the biggest difference observed in their attitudes on OR performance. Morris (2013) emphasized that reading rate should be assessed in a "reading-for-meaning context" (p. 49). It was never intended, but Jaesung was driven by the desire to read faster. Attempts were made several times to divert his attention to comprehension, but improving reading rate seemed to become Jaesung's important goal. As pointed out, he appeared to have been influenced by the speed with which native users of English communicate with each other.

Still, improvements in reading rate were found in the case of Eunwoo as well, who was not particularly interested in reading fast. Thus, regular practice seems to lead to rapid and automatic processing of texts, whether intended or not. As discussed earlier, reading rate has been acknowledged to be highly correlated with overall reading abilities (Fuchs et al., 2001; Grabe, 2009; Hudson et al., 2005; Morris, 2013). It is likely that repeated OR experience would have positive impacts on reading development in that it promotes more proficient and effortless processing of print.

On the other hand, measured reading accuracy of the participants underwent little significant change on the surface. In other words, the number of decoding

errors has not decreased significantly. Especially, substitutions, the most frequent error type, occurred constantly throughout the sessions. However, other qualitative changes were observed in the data of decoding errors. Jaesung, who was more accurate in decoding words than Eunwoo, started to make errors that reflect his attempts to predict the following word based on the preceding one, thus saying *every day* instead of *every opponent* or *old man* instead of *old game*. There seemed to be a period of transition till Jaesung was quite accurate in recognizing the words right away, rather than errors were instantly reduced.

Meanwhile, as for Eunwoo, a specific type of substitution errors reduced, and those were the ones on which the instructor provided feedback to him. Substitutions between the words starting with *w* occurred repetitively, and even Eunwoo noticed it. Thus, he seemed to consciously put efforts to reducing the specific type of errors. Regarding the other types of error, less attention appeared to be paid to decoding problems, since Eunwoo was mostly focused on understanding the story. Therefore, it seems that feedback plays a decisive role in drawing learners' attention to the accuracy issue. At the same time, however, caution must be taken so as not to put pressure on correcting errors. Eunwoo seemed to be under a lot of stress when presented with the record of his decoding errors in the last session, and responded as follows:

Excerpt 6.1. I didn't know that I made so many errors like this. This put me under a lot of stress. (Eunwoo's Interview Quote, Session 16)

If error correction had been excessive, the participants would not only have been pressured but also have performed more poorly, trying not to make errors.

In addition, assessment on decoding errors somehow failed to capture the participants' improvement in word reading skills. Slowly but steadily, their reading of unfamiliar words became more skillful. Initially, it took longer for them to manage to read the unknown words to them, and most of the time only to fail in the end, thus leading to mispronunciation or requiring examiner-help. Over time they could read them quite accurately, and it took less time to connect the letters with their corresponding sounds, which must be another significant improvement worth noticing.

Lastly, the participants' comprehension was assessed as well to see firstly whether OR practice contributed to their overall reading skills, and ultimately led them to read more difficult texts without negative effects on reading rate or accuracy. In this respect, Eunwoo's performance was remarkable, since not only his comprehension was steadily flawless while reading level 1 texts, but also he successfully read level 2 texts in the last four sessions. He seemed to have no difficulty in reading words out loud and attend to meaning at the same time. Viewed in some L1 education researchers' perspective that OR facilitates early reading development, it seems that Eunwoo fell under the group of learners who could benefit much from OR practice than from silent reading alone.

On the other hand, Jaesung began with level 2 texts and had to adjust his level back to level 1. He appeared to feel that level 2 texts were difficult, and to make matters worse reading aloud made it harder for him to focus on meaning. The

problem could have been in text selection. He looked much more comfortable reading level 1 texts, and showed improvements both in reading rate and accuracy. However, his comprehension was not as complete as Eunwoo's in the same text, while Jaesung read more quickly and accurately than Eunwoo did. When he attempted to read level 2 texts in the last two sessions, comprehension was rarely improved even if his overall reading skills got better. This seems to be related to his tendency to focus on correct pronunciation and to read texts faster. This phenomenon has been described as "word calling" in reading literature (LaBerge & Samuels, 1974; Stanovich, 1986; Quirk & Beem, 2012). Word calling occurs "when the words are efficiently decoded into their spoken forms without comprehension of the passage taking place" (p. 372), and it has been assumed as problematic (Goodman, 1968, 1973; Smith, 1982).

In addition, according to the findings from Riley and Lee (1996), retell leads learners to attend to detailed information whereas summary makes them focus more on main ideas. Therefore, retell task might have influenced Jaesung's comprehension since he was basically asked to tell everything he could remember, and this direction could have made him attend to details, failing to put weight on the central ideas of the text. Accordingly, he was requested several times to focus more on main contents, but this had little effect.

It might be hard to conclude that Jaesung was a learner who had already internalized oral reading and underwent transition to silent reading, because his comprehension problems would have been affected by many other factors. He seemed to be at ease when reading level 1 texts aloud, and had little difficulty

understanding the text. It was some level 2 texts that he struggled to read aloud and understand the content of at the same time. What is clear is that his attention while reading those texts aloud was distracted by other cognitive exertions to pronounce words correctly and sound more fluent, which lends support to previous findings in the literature that OR calls such attention to word decoding or pronunciation that it might hinder reading process, particularly for understanding the text (Franklin et al., 2014; Gabrielatos, 2002; Gibson, 2008; Rowell, 1976).

Overall, more clear direction seems to be needed for emphasizing that meaning is the goal of reading. Otherwise, no matter how the learners practice reading quickly and accurately, it would end up being a mere "word calling."

# CHAPTER 7.
# CONCLUSION

This chapter presents the conclusion of the study. Section 7.1 summarizes the key findings of the research, followed by a consideration of pedagogical implications in Section 7.2. The chapter concludes with assessment of the limitations of the study and recommended implications for further research (Section 7.3).

## 7.1. Key Findings of the Study

The primary objective of this study was to investigate how Korean EFL middle school students experience OR instruction; and in particular to explore their reading behaviors during the practice and perceptions towards the overall experience. The secondary aim of the study was to examine how they develop their reading skills, especially in terms of reading rate, accuracy, and comprehension.

The study included two 3rd graders of middle school, Jaesung and Eunwoo, as participants. For 14 weeks, the interactions between the participants and the instructor were observed, and both regular and intensive interviews were conducted to inquire their thoughts and feelings at the moment and towards the whole process.

Admittedly, case-study design including only two participants is limited in

generalizability. Still, as Duff and Anderson (2015) note, case-study is meaningful in that it could still provide a "detailed portrayal of issues, settings, individuals, and interactions," allowing an in-depth understanding of the unique experiences. The key findings of the present study are presented below.

A preliminary finding from this research was the proper diagnosis of the participants' various reading problems. First, both were particularly less-skilled in decoding words as revealed by their difficulty in pronunciation. This difficulty mirrors their lack of phonological awareness, along with the lack of practice in connecting print to corresponding sounds. Second, the participants initially read slowly, laboriously, and in a word-by-word manner, indicating incomplete mastery of rapid and automatic word recognition. Third, appropriate chunking was rarely observed during their early OR performance. It was found that they had been unaware of how to read sentences with phrasing. Lastly, word calling occurred in the case of Jaesung, since he was becoming more and more fluent over time, but with comprehension not necessarily accompanied.

In regard to the correction of the above issue, OR practice seemed to be a reasonable solution, which is the second significant finding of the present study. Overall, OR enhanced the participants' decoding skills, increased their reading rate, and served as the opportunity to practice appropriate chunking. Above all, by listening to their recorded performance and reflecting on the problems and improvements, their awareness on various reading skills was raised with effect. Since they had rarely experienced sounding words out loud before, this experience functioned as a window to their current stage of reading development.

Lastly, OR practice helped to build the participants' confidence in reading, and to arouse interest in reading activity itself. Seldom used in the current education system, OR seems to have huge possibilities to be employed in classrooms or as an individual learning strategy. The recommended use of OR instruction is to be discussed in the following section.

The significance of the present study lies in following aspects. First, it was found that the participants had dim awareness of what constitutes good oral reading. Initially, it was expected that the participants discovered for themselves what lacked in their performance, clearly articulated it, and endeavored at improvements. However, the early sessions witnessed the situations where the participants had little to say about their performance, having only the vague impression that something was not enough. This is probably because they had rarely performed OR or scrutinized how more fluent readers perform before participating in the current study. Inevitably, the role of the instructor extended to include pinpointing each important aspect of fluent reading and helping them to be able to notice it. Taken together, these findings implicate a significant role of feedback in less advanced L2 learners' OR practice. They need to know first what is good oral reading; how they can sound fluent when reading. Then, appropriate and facilitative feedback should be provided.

In addition, OR was found to function differently depending on learners' proficiency level and the purpose of practice. For Eunwoo, OR experience was an opportunity to enhance his overall reading skills, including reading rate, fluency, decoding skills, and comprehension. In the case of Jaesung, it might be more valid

to say that the experience was more of intensive fluency or pronunciation training. It cannot be said that the latter case is undesirable because some learners might need to focus on those areas. If this is not the case, however, OR practice must center on becoming the "comprehension event" as Hoffman (1987) emphasized.

## 7.2. Pedagogical Implications

The results of the present study confirmed that OR revealed the possible sources of difficulties that Korean EFL learners have in reading, which might be hard to capture under the current reading education system, and that OR could serve as an instructional tool, contributing to the corrections of the problems in question. The findings also suggest various factors that should be taken into account when implementing OR in real classrooms.

Firstly, OR needs to be included as part of current reading instruction to some extent. OR could be used as a useful instructional tool, not as a mere task that is given to students for making them concentrate on lectures. It can be used to help students understand the structure of sentences, raising their awareness of how to segment a sentence using meaningful units. This is in line with Jeon's (2012) claim that implicit reading instructions using pausal units should be balanced with explicit explanations on grammar, vocabulary, and reading strategies. In addition, OR could be used to build students' fluency, which is known to be much neglected in second language education. Regular engagement in OR practice will contribute to rapid and automatic processing of texts, making reading a more

effortless task for students. Most importantly, students can be exposed to more input through the teacher's modeling and their own attempts to read aloud. In the EFL context where there is less input and limited opportunity to use the language, OR practice could somehow open the way for learners to connect written language with spoken language, as Rasinski (2010) notes. In addition, it should be remembered that instruction is always meaning-based not to produce "word callers." With these in mind, students might as well be engaged in OR experience on a regular basis, since more steady and long-term practice is required for becoming a fluent reader.

Next, OR can be a useful diagnostic tool for monitoring students' reading development. Reading rate or accuracy seems to be relatively less emphasized, at least in Korean context, probably because they are not evaluated in the tests. However, informal assessment can be adopted to look into these component skills. Teachers need to pay attention to them, especially in cases of less-skilled or struggling readers. Informal assessment using OR enables quick and insightful diagnosis of the problems, and possibly leads to reaching appropriate actions to take.

Finally, individual learners are recommended to pay attention to the usefulness of OR in their learning to read. They could voluntarily practice OR in order to build their fluency, to improve their pronunciation, or simply to read aloud texts in a more fun way. However, additional support of modeling remains important. Students should be able to ask for help from the teacher or other more advanced learners, or even to utilize audio-recorded files of texts. When individual learners

feel the need, it is necessary that teachers are prepared to provide help or recommend useful resources for the practice.

## 7.3. Limitations of the Study and Suggestion for Further Research

The most obvious limitation in this research was that of a small sample size. Therefore, the findings might not be generalized to other Korean EFL lower-intermediate level students. With a larger sample, more rich data and any real differences in it would almost certainly have emerged. It is expected that the present study could shed insight on the use of OR as an instructional and diagnostic tool, and what needs to be taken into account during the implementation.

This study was further limited by methodological aspects such as the duration of the research, the materials used, and instrument for assessment. Since the present study only lasted for eight weeks in total, it failed to observe more long-term development of the participants' reading abilities and to examine other potential areas of OR to be effectively used. Moreover, as reading materials *Pearson English Readers* was selected due to its benefits in terms of accessibility as e-book format and inclusion of a variety of genres. However, vocabulary uses and formality of texts varied much across the genres, therefore creating an impression that even between the texts of the same level there are noticeable differences when students read them. In the future study, it is recommended to

check the level of the texts and provide enough information of it for learners. Lastly, assessing reading comprehension using retell protocol might have led the participants to focus on detailed information, thus leading to less extent of text comprehension reported.

Therefore, further research incorporating a similar but more refined design, and a larger sample size, would be of value. Moreover, the effective use of OR practice on other variables, such as prosodic features and speaking skills may provide more valuable insights for teachers and educational institutions as well as for individual L2 learners.

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*instruction: Research-based best practices* (pp. 265-278). Guilford Press.

# APPENDICES

# APPENDIX A. Pre-Interview Questions

Learner Background

- 영어권 국가에서 거주하거나 어학연수 등을 받은 적이 있나요?

- 영어는 언제부터 배우기 시작했나요?

- 영어로 말해본 경험이 있나요?

- 최근 영어 성적은 어떤가요?

- 평소에 한국어 책은 얼마나 읽나요?

- 영어 책은 얼마나 읽나요?

- 영어에서 자신 있는 점은 무엇인가요?

- 영어 공부에서 가장 어려운 점은 무엇인가요?

- 영어를 좋아하나요?

- 영어를 잘하고 싶나요?

- 영어 지문을 소리 내어 읽은 적이 있나요?

- 소리 내어 읽기에 대해서 어떻게 생각하나요?

English Learning in School

- 학교에서 주로 영어의 어떤 영역을 공부하나요?

- 학교 수업이 영어 실력 향상에 도움이 된다고 생각하나요?

- 학교에서 소리 내어 읽기를 한 적이 있나요?

Private Tutoring

- 영어 사교육을 받은 적이 있나요?

- 사교육에서 주로 어떤 영역을 공부하나요?

- 사교육이 영어 실력 향상에 도움이 된다고 생각하나요?

# APPENDIX B. Post-Interview Questions

General Perception

- 모델링의 어떤 점이 좋았나요?

- 모델링의 어떤 부분이 아쉬웠나요?

- 가장 기억에 남는 피드백은 무엇인가요?

- 어떤 면에서 본인의 실력이 가장 많이 향상됐다고 느끼나요?

- 어떤 도움이 추가적으로 필요하다고 생각하나요?

- 앞으로도 영어 읽기를 할 것 같나요?

Importance

- 속도는 영어 읽기에서 중요하다고 생각하나요?

- 정확도는 영어 읽기에서 중요하다고 생각하나요?

- 이해는 영어 읽기에서 중요하다고 생각하나요?

- 끊어 읽기는 영어 읽기에서 중요하다고 생각하나요?

Materials

- 읽은 책의 전반적인 난이도는 어땠나요?

- 가장 좋았던/별로였던 책은 무엇인가요?

- 가장 쉬웠던/어려웠던 책은 무엇인가요?

# APPENDIX C. Post-Interview Questionnaire (Jaesung)

<div align="center">

사후 설문지

</div>

연구 과제명 : A Case-study on Korean EFL Middle School Student's Reading-aloud Experiences (한국 EFL 중학생들의 소리 내어 읽기 경험에 대한 사례 연구)(가제)
연구 책임자명 : 전채린(사범대학 외국어교육과 영어전공, 석사과정).

<div align="center">

Part I Likert-scale

</div>

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**■ 모델링의 빠르기**
※ 변화가 있으면 여러 개 고르기 ex) 7 -> 5

   1     2     3     4     5     6     (7)     8     9
(아주 느림)                        (아주 빠름)

**■ 읽은 책의 전반적인 난이도**
※ 변화가 있으면 여러 개 고르기 ex) 7 -> 5

                  니     ET       AH
   1     2     3    (4)   (5)   6   (7)    8     9
(아주 쉬움)                        (아주 어려움)

---

**■ 중요도**

<div align="center">

&lt;속도&gt;

</div>

   1     2     3     4     5     6     (7)    8     9
(아주 중요하지 않음)             (아주 중요함)

<div align="center">

&lt;정확도&gt;

</div>

   1     2     3     4     5     6     7    (8)    9
(아주 중요하지 않음)             (아주 중요함)

<div align="center">

&lt;이해&gt;

</div>

   1     2     3     4     5     6     7    8    (9)
(아주 중요하지 않음)             (아주 중요함)

<div align="center">

&lt;끊어 읽기&gt;

</div>

   1     2     3     4     5    (6)    7     8     9
(아주 중요하지 않음)             (아주 중요함)

---

■ 앞으로 소리 내어 읽기를 할 일이 있을까?

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | ⑤ | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

(아예 안할 것 같다)                    (아주 자주 할 것 같다)

## Part Ⅱ 간단한 기입형

■ 가장 많이 향상됐다고 느끼는 점

1. 끊어읽기    2. 속도    3. 내용파악

■ 기억 남는 피드백(언어적/비언어적. 짧은 코멘트/긴 코멘트 상관없음)

1. 끊어읽기    2. 내용파악    3. 단어

■ 모델링의 이런 점이 좋았다

1. 반응    2. 모르는단어    3. 끊어읽기

■ 모델링의 이런 부분이 아쉬웠다

1. 명확강조이해    2.    3.

## Part Ⅲ 자유 답변

■ 가장 재밌었던/별로였던 책과 그 이유

편견 / 내가 좋아하는 축구라서    오드라헙번/오드라헙번이 내 안에 약간 좀 이상해

■ 이외에 중요하다고 느끼는 것? 더 향상시키고 싶은 것?

문장구조 이해

■ 읽기 어려웠던 단어들과 그 이유


■ 이렇게 더 해주면 다른 학생들에게 도움이 될 것 같다

# APPENDIX D. Decoding Errors (Jaesung)

| Session | Mispronunciation | Substitution | Omission | Insertion | Examiner-help |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | Michael<br>2866<br>4000 (sc)<br>8000 (sc) | From → for<br>1966 → 13.. (sc)<br>1970 → 13.. (sc)<br>1971 → 13.. (sc)<br>Do → go (sc) | | | Britain<br>Xtralite<br>$ |
| 3 | | Shout → shoot<br>Said → say (sc)<br>Into → to (sc) | | | Equipment<br>Kirk |
| 4 | Island<br>Asian<br>Women | Three → there<br>It → its<br>For → from (sc)<br>Tricks → tricky (sc)<br>Couldn't → could (sc) | | afraid (of) (sc) | Alcatraz |
| 5 | Belgium<br>Nation | English → England<br>Dig → big (sc) | | | Baroness |
| 6 | | Be → he (sc)<br>Want → wanted (sc) | | be (in) the | Gregory |
| 7 | Nun<br>Mansion<br>Accident | Read → read<br>Mouth → month (sc) | | | Sean |
| 8 | | 1951 → 1905 (sc)<br>And → were (sc)<br>Wasn't → was (sc) | Score (his) first (sc) | With (the) his friends (sc)<br>Were (very) happy (sc)<br>In (the) Brazil (sc)<br>Pele (was) played (sc) | |
| 9 | | Who → she<br>Visited → visit<br>Pele → zito (sc)<br>Same → say (sc)<br>Nineteen → ninety (sc)<br>Family → pele (sc) | | | $4,700,000 |
| 10 | Buses | Quick → quickly<br>Every opponent → every day (sc) | | | Miami |

| No. | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 11 | Kinshasa | Of → on<br>Old game → old man<br>Tries → tried<br>1974 → 1944 (sc)<br>Be → he (sc)<br>Isn't → is (sc) | (ddn't)<br>Called (to) him (sc) | | Zaire<br>Foreman |
| 12 | shot | Basket → basketball<br>His → him (sc) | The (A) team (sc) | | 45/2=22.5<br>Carolina<br>Georgetown |
| 13 | | Michael's → Michael<br>Eighteen → eighty (sc)<br>Catch → caught (sc) | (the)<br>Come (back) to (sc) | | Loudest<br>1,000,000<br>250,000<br>shouted |
| 14 | | Because → became<br>She → the<br>Want → wanted<br>Like → likely<br>We'll → well (sc) | (not) | | |
| 15 | | Married → made (sc)<br>Quiet → quite<br>One → and (sc)<br>Gregory → Givenchy<br>Quiet → quite (sc) | | It's (not) a (sc) | |
| Total (%) | 15(15%) | 51(51%) | 8(8%) | 6(6%) | 20(20%) |

# APPENDIX E. Sample Retell (Jaesung)

**Original Text**:

Australian Bill Moyes was thirty-four when he started hang gliding. That's old for an extreme sport! When his son Steve was fourteen, Bill woke him up at four o'clock every morning. They went hang gliding before Steve went to school. Later Steve was a world champion, and there's a movie about Bill and Steve, The Birdmen of Kilimanjaro. The father and son climbed up to the top of the mountain and flew down to the bottom.

  Flying was Bill Moyes's Life. He loved to fly, but he didn't like airplanes. In 1956, he flew higher than any man in the world, at 350 meters above the ground. In 1970, he stopped jumping off mountains. Airplanes pulled his hang glider through the sky. In 1971, he flew at 2,866 meters.

  Bill Moyes started to make and sell hang gliders. He sold his first hang glider in 1967. He was very happy-and he took the man home for dinner! His son Steve and his daughter Vicki worked with him. They made Xtralite, the world's number one hang glider. Bill hang glided ten or twelve times every year because he wanted to try his new hang gliders.

  When Bill Moyes looks back on his life, is he happy? "I wanted to do these things and I did them." Bill told Hang Gliding magazine. "It wasn't difficult."

**Jaesung's Retell (Session 2, Score: 4)**

34살 때쯤인가 그때 시작했대요 행글라이딩을. 아들이랑 같이 했는데 아들이 새벽 4시에 깨워가지고 하러 가고 아들은 행글라이딩 하고 학교를 간대요. 그리고 아들이 챔피언이 돼요. 그리고 킬리만자로에서도 해요. 그리고 딸이 도와줘요 그거 하는 걸. 행글라이딩 하는 걸. 어떤 사람을 저녁식사에 초대해요. 행글라이딩 하는 사람 제일 처음 한 사람? 아닌데 기록을 깼나? 아닌데. 잡지에 올라왔나? 아닌데. 그 첫 번째 선수? 아닌데. 뭘 만들었어요 이 사람이. 협회 같은 걸. 거기에서 제일 처음 수제자! 잡지에서 인터뷰 했어요. 행복하냐고. 행복하대요 잡지에 나와서. 하는 게 재밌대요.

# APPENDIX F. Post-Interview Questionnaire (Eunwoo)

## 사후 설문지

연구 과제명 : A Case-study on Korean EFL Middle School Student's Reading-aloud Experiences (한국 EFL 중학생들의 소리 내어 읽기 경험에 대한 사례 연구) (가제)

연구 책임자명 : 전채린(사범대학 외국어교육과 영어전공, 석사과정).

Part I Likert-scale

■ 모델링의 빠르기

※ 변화가 있으면 여러 개 고르기 ex) 7 -> 5

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | ⑤ | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (아주 느림) | | | | | | | (아주 빠름) | |

■ 읽은 책의 전반적인 난이도

※ 변화가 있으면 여러 개 고르기 ex) 7 -> 5

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | ⑤ | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (아주 쉬움) | | | | | | | (아주 어려움) | |

■ 중요도

<속도>

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | ⑤ | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (아주 중요하지 않음) | | | | | | | (아주 중요함) | |

<정확도>

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | ⑦ | 8 | 9 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (아주 중요하지 않음) | | | | | | | (아주 중요함) | |

<이해>

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | ⑦ | 8 | 9 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (아주 중요하지 않음) | | | | | | | (아주 중요함) | |

<끊어 읽기>

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | ⑦ | 8 | 9 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (아주 중요하지 않음) | | | | | | | (아주 중요함) | |

■ 앞으로 소리 내어 읽기를 할 일이 있을까?

1        2        3        4        ⑤        6        7        8        9
(아예 안할 것 같다)                                    (아주 자주 할 것 같다)

## Part II 간단한 기입형

■ 가장 많이 향상됐다고 느끼는 점

1. 단어읽기        2. 속도        3. 9해

■ 기억 남는 피드백(언어적/비언어적, 짧은 코멘트/긴 코멘트 상관없음)

1. 띄어 읽어봐라    2. 틀린단어 재규    3. 빨리읽기

■ 모델링의 이런 점이 좋았다

1. 모르는 단어듣기    2. 띄어읽기    3. 문장이해

■ 모델링의 이런 부분이 아쉬웠다

1.                2.                3.

## Part III 자유 답변

■ 가장 재밌었던/별로였던 책과 그 이유

톰소여, 스토리가 좋았다.

■ 이외에 중요하다고 느끼는 것? 더 향상시키고 싶은 것?

문상해석, 가장 중요하다.

■ 읽기 어려웠던 단어들과 그 이유

이음, 이상한 이음이 많다.

■ 이렇게 더 해주면 다른 학생들에게 도움이 될 것 같다

간식

# APPENDIX G. Decoding Errors (Eunwoo)

| Session | Mispronunciation | Substitution | Omission | Insertion | Examiner-help |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | Injun<br>Joe | talked → talk<br>to → a<br>walk → work<br>walked → worked<br>were → where<br>waited → wanted (sc)<br>street → story (sc)<br>liked → like (sc)<br>went → want (sc)<br>said → an.. (sc)<br>the → a (sc)<br>do → did (sc)<br>always → alone (sc)<br>quietly → quickly (sc) | | | |
| 3 | trial<br>tore | again → angry<br>afternoon → morning<br>they → then<br>about too → about the<br>take → talk<br>watched → went (sc)<br>adventure day → adventure today (sc)<br>quickly → quietly (sc) | | | |
| 4 | | come → came<br>liked → listened<br>came → come (sc)<br>they → the (sc)<br>come → came (sc)<br>there → they (sc) | | | Mrs.<br>Douglas |
| 5 | | for → of<br>after → again (sc)<br>new → many (sc)<br>started → stayed (sc)<br>walk → talk (sc)<br>were → went (sc)<br>want → was (sc)<br>want → wanted (sc) | | look (at) | Thatcher<br>$12,000 |

| # | | Corrections | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | | come → came<br>stayed → started<br>then → them<br>Pele's → Pele<br>evenings → every (sc)<br>with → was (sc)<br>no → one (sc)<br>Brazilian → Brazil (sc)<br>went → want (sc)<br>wasn't → want (sc) | Maracana |
| 7 | wanted | at → and<br>and → then<br>to → for<br>countries → centuries<br>like → look<br>his → he<br>in → I (sc)<br>1956 → 1957 (sc)<br>and → then (sc)<br>dub → cup (sc) | Rosemeri<br>$ |
| 8 | | countries → coins<br>Pete → Peter<br>from → for<br>they're → there are<br>asks → says (sc)<br>walk → walked (sc)<br>says → said (sc)<br>in → is (sc)<br>these → the (sc) | tune<br>valuable |
| 9 | | you → I<br>hear → her<br>want → went<br>into the shop → into my shop (sc)<br>hey → here (sc) | valuable<br>Tracy |
| 10 | Dean<br>shot<br>heels | A team → one team<br>doesn't → don't<br>want → went<br>teaches → teachers<br>run at → run to<br>he → the | 45/2=22.5<br>Carolina<br>Chapel<br>Georgetown<br>Hoyas<br>New Orleans |

| 11 | retire | baseball → basketball (sc) |
| | | school → soccer (sc) |
| | | stay → say (sc) |
| | | wanted → wants (sc) |
| | | 73 → 17 (sc) |
| | | court → coach (sc) |
| | | colleges → challenges (sc) |
| | | and on TV → and the TV (sc) |
| | | this (makes) Michael (sc) |
| | | visits → visited (sc) |
| | | these → the (sc) |
| | | on → of (sc) |
| | | don't → doesn't (sc) |
| | | love → like (sc) |
| 12 | felt | then → them |
| | stomach | slept → sleep |
| | | died → dead |
| | | was → has |
| | | to → the |
| | | hurt → hunt |
| | | strange → strong |
| | | tried → tired |
| | | hard → had |
| | | through → throw |
| | | caught → catch |
| | | ate → eat |
| | | liked → looked |
| | | the → to |
| | | knew → know (sc) |
| | | large → re.. (sc) |
| | | on → in (sc) |
| | | weak → walk (sc) |
| | | snarled → snailed (sc) |
| | | at → a (sc) |
| | | small → smell (sc) |
| 13 | Beaver | for a long time → to a long time |
| | live | taught → thought |
| | | push → put |
| | | bite → bit |
| | | into the water → into the river (sc) |
| | | listen → listened (sc) |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | out of → about (sc) | | | |
| | angrily → angry (sc) | | | |
| | bite → bit (sc) | | | |
| | interesting → strange (sc) | | | |
| | were → where (sc) | | | |
| | shouted → shooted (sc) | | | |
| 14 | bit → bite | (the) | | |
| | his → he | | | |
| | through → thought | | | |
| | older → old | | | |
| | died → dead | | | |
| | than → and | | | |
| | met → meet | | | |
| | he was with → he went to | | | |
| | different → diffi... (sc) | | | |
| | understand → understood (sc) | | | |
| | to → at (sc) | | | |
| | the → a (sc) | | | |
| 15 | much → more (sc) | | | |
| | knew → know | | | |
| | took → take | | | |
| | about → but (sc) | | | |
| | not → no (sc) | | | |
| | quietly → quickly (sc) | | | |
| | round → around | | | |
| | stood → stopped (sc) | | | |
| | it → him (sc) | | | |
| | the → to | | | |
| | tied → tried (sc) | | | |
| | wanted → waited (sc) | | | |
| | he → the (sc) | | | |
| Total(%) | 13(7%) | 146(81%) | 2(1%) | 1(0.5%) | 17(9%) |

# APPENDIX H. Sample Retell (Eunwoo)

**Original Text**:

One morning before school, Tom's friend Huck Finn waited for him in the street. Huck didn't have a home, and he never went to school. People in the town didn't like him. But Tom liked Huck.

  Huck said, "Let's have an adventure."
  "What can we do on our adventure?" Tom asked.
  "Let's go to the graveyard at night-at twelve o'clock!" Huck answered.
  "That's a good adventure," Tom said. "Let's meet at eleven o'clock."
  Then Tom went to school, but he was late. The teacher was angry. He asked, "Why are you late again?"
  "I'm late because I talked to Huck Finn," Tom said.
  Then the teacher was very angry. "Sit with the girls," he said to Tom.
  Tom sat near the beautiful new girl. He was happy. He looked at her.
  "What's your name?" he asked.
  "Becky," she answered.
  Tom smiled and said, "My name's Tom."
  The teacher was angry again. "Tom Sawyer, stop talking! Go to your place now," he said. Tom went to his place.
  At twelve o'clock Tom and Becky didn't go hom. They stayed in the school yard and talked. Tom said, "I love you. Do you love me?"
  "Yes," Becky answered.
  "Good," Tom said. "Then you're going to walk to school with me every day. Amy always walked with me."
  "Amy!" Becky said angrily. "Do you love her?"
  "No," Tom answered. "I love you now. Do you want to walk with me?"
  But Becky was angry with Tom. She walked away and didn't answer. Tom was unhappy. He didn't go to school in the afternoon.

**Eunwoo's Retell (Session 2, Score: 4)**:

Graveyard인가 거기 12시에 만나서 가자 했는데 친구랑 11시에 만나서 12시에 가자고 했고 Huck이랑 만나기로 했고. 학교 갔는데 선생님한테 왜 늦었냐고 선생님이 물어봤는데 Huck이랑 이야기하다 왔다 그래서 여자애 옆에 가라 그랬는데 그 옆에 애가 이쁜 여자애가 있었고. Becky. 그래서 걔가 기분 좋았는데 이름도 물어보고 기분 너무 좋다가 선생님이 다시 네 자리로 가라고 해서 다시 갔어요. 끝나고 걔랑 사랑고백 하고 사랑한다 했는데 다른 애 누구였지 Amy 걔한테 막 걔랑 막 일하러 간다 했나? 걔 좋아하냐 물어봤는데 지금은 안 좋아하고 지금은 너 좋아한다 그래가지고 Becky가 화나서 갔어요. 그래서 걔가 슬펐어요.

# 국 문 초 록

소리 내어 읽기(Oral reading; OR)는 모국어 상황에서 효과적인 교육 도구로 오랫동안 사용되어 왔다. 특히, 많은 연구에서 덜 숙련된 또는 초기 읽기 학습자들이 소리 내어 읽기를 통해 큰 향상을 보여왔다. 그러나 제 2 언어 상황(ESL 혹은 EFL)에서는 학습자의 전반적인 읽기 능력을 향상시키기 위한 소리 내어 읽기의 사용이 비교적 부족한 실정이다. 따라서 본 연구에서는 영어를 외국어로 배우는 한국 중학생들이 소리 내어 읽기 교수를 통해 어떤 경험을 하게 되는지, 그리고 특히 읽기 속도(rate), 정확도(accuracy), 이해(comprehension)를 중심으로 어떻게 읽기 능력을 발달시켜가는지를 탐구하고자 한다.

본 연구에서는 한국어를 모국어로 하는 남자 중학생 2명이 참가하였다. 그들은 교수자와 1대 1로 16주 동안 소리 내어 읽기를 연습했으며, 그들의 읽기 속도, 정확도, 이해의 변화가 측정되었다. 또한 소리 내어 읽기 경험에 대한 그들의 인식을 심층적으로 탐구하기 위해 모든 상호작용 과정을 전사하여 질적으로 분석하였다. 본 연구의 결과는 다음과 같다.

첫째, 소리 내어 읽기를 통해 참가자가 지닌 읽기와 관련된 다양한 문제를 심층적으로 진단할 수 있었다. 그들의 문자 해독 능력(decoding skills)은 부족했으며 끊어 읽기(chunking)의 문제 또한 발견되었다. 그 중 한 참가자의 경우 이해보다는 소리 내어 읽는 것에만 집중하는 모습을 보이기도 했다(word calling). 이때 학습자들이 스스로 이러한 문제를 인식하지 못하는 편이었는데, 이를 알아차리도록 적

절히 피드백을 주고 연습을 독려하기 위해 교수자의 역할이 매우 중요했다. 다음으로 소리 내어 읽기는 위와 같은 문제들을 해결하는 데에 있어서 유용한 것으로 밝혀졌다. 전반적으로 참가자들의 음운론적 인식능력(phonological awareness)이 향상되었고 읽기 속도가 빨라졌으며 적절한 끊어 읽기를 할 수 있게 되었다. 하지만 무엇보다 이 과정이 단순한 낭독으로 변모되는 것을 막기 위해 텍스트 이해는 가장 중요한 우선순위가 되어야 했다. 마지막으로, 소리 내어 읽기는 참가자의 읽기에 대한 자신감을 키워주고 독서 활동에 대한 관심을 불러 일으켰다. 특히, 참가자가 자신의 수행을 직접 모니터하고 스스로 발전해나가는 모습을 확인함으로써 이러한 긍정적인 영향이 강화되었다.

본 연구는 연구 참가자의 수와 여러 방법론적 점에서 한계를 내재함에도 불구하고, 한국인 EFL 학습자가 소리 내어 읽기 경험을 어떻게 인식하는지, 또한 이를 정규 수업시간에서 혹은 개별적인 학습 도구로써, 더불어 비공식적인 평가 도구로써 어떻게 사용할 수 있는지에 대해 통찰을 제공한다. 이와 같은 결과 토대로 현재 한국 영어교육에서 소리 내어 읽기를 주기적으로 사용하는 것을 권고하는 바이며, 제2 외국어 학습에서의 소리 내어 읽기 개입에 대한 심층적인 이해에 기여하고자 한다. 교수에 있어서의 함의와 향후 연구에 대한 제안도 논의하고자 한다.

주요어: 소리 내어 읽기, 읽기 속도, 해독 오류, 음운 인식, 끊어 읽기, 이해
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