

## Reading comprehension in a sociocultural context: A case study of Iraqi EFL learners

Azeez, Jihad Hasan ✉  
University of Samarra, Iraq ([jihada97@gmail.com](mailto:jihada97@gmail.com))

Received: 6 September 2018  
Available Online: 14 January 2019

Revised: 10 December 2018  
DOI: 10.5861/ijrse.2019.3021

Accepted: 14 December 2018

ISSN: 2243-7703  
Online ISSN: 2243-7711

OPEN ACCESS



### *Abstract*

The main thrust of the study was to explore the ways based on which reading skill may be influenced by a sociocultural-instructional method. Following a quantitative quasi-experimental design, 100 Iraqi ELT students were selected as the participants of the study who were divided into two experimental and one control group. All participants took the pre-test before going under any instruction. The experimental group 1 went under a balance method which is a traditional one, and the experimental group 2 under a combination of New Literacy Studies and Feuerstein's instrumental Enrichment Program. The control group, on the other hand, received the instruction irrelevant to reading skill. All the groups took the posttest. However, the findings of the study showed that the treatment was influential for both experimental groups; significant differences were found between the three groups in general and between the two experimental groups in particular. In other words, the experimental group, which went under the sociocultural-based instruction, outperformed significantly. The study demonstrated that scaffolding, collaborative learning, mediation, and ZPD are the crucial factors to be considered if we attempt to improve the education and bring about revolutionary education and what is interpreted as Kramsch' third space or Cook's multicompetence. It seems that the provided scaffolding opened up the opportunities for the Iraqi EFL learners to learn how to learn, to be autonomous and initiative. They were also equipped with the appropriate strategies and techniques by which they got the capabilities to transform and restructure their knowledge.

**Keywords:** scaffolding; mediation; investment; complexity theory; zone of proximal development (ZPD); collaborative learning; appropriation

## Reading comprehension in a sociocultural context: A case study of Iraqi EFL learners

### 1. Background of the study

Literacy is a field of study for which considering the sociocultural setting of teaching and learning seems to be crucial. To this end, some scholars such as Gee (2015) deploys “socially contested term” instead of literacy. Such a concept, in effect, denotes the complexities rooted in the sociocultural interactions, contexts, and the multitude factors involved.

Having abandoned literacy as an individual ability for reading and writing, Gee (2015) argues that social variables have a complex, dialectic and dynamic relation with ideological and cultural models and are working in a macro system influenced by power relations. Nevertheless, literacy needs to be approached in social and cultural contexts wherein historical and political issues are playing significant roles. Notably, Gee (2015, p. 42) reminds, “talk about literacy can often be an indirect way to talk about larger social and political issue”. Such a comment can also denote that literacy is a symbolic mediation and here the main purpose of the educational system is to transform it into a psychological one for cognitive, cultural, ideological and social development.

It demonstrates that literacy is intertwined and complicated with talk, interaction, values, and beliefs (Barton & Hamilton, 1998; Barton, Hamilton, & Ivanič, 2000; Cook-Gumperz, 1986; Heath, 1983; Scollon & Scollon, 1981; Scribner & Cole, 1981). Put it differently, literacy is historically and culturally situated which means that literacy is “only bits, bits that are differently composed and situated in different social practices. For example, school-based writing and reading lead to different effects than reading and writing embedded in various religious practices (Gee, 2015, p. 46).

The two concepts of meaning and ideology are crucial for a sociocultural-situated literacy program. Having considered meaning as a negotiating and collaborative practice, Gee (2015) points out that value and connotation of words which affect the process of meaning making, using language, performance and even literacy are crucial or in his words:

*socially contested terms are words and word combinations whose cultural models hold implications about “right” and “wrong,” “good” and “bad,” “acceptable” and “not acceptable,” “appropriate” and “not appropriate,” and other such value-laden distinctions. When these distinctions are applied to people, they have implications for how “social goods” are or should be distributed in the world (Gee, 2015, p. 23).*

In a further step, Gee (2015, p. 15) develops a theory for which the following influences the process of meaning making:

- Can vary across contexts of use.
- Are composed of changing stories, knowledge, beliefs, and values that are encapsulated in cultural models, not definitions.
- Are a matter, as well, of social negotiations rooted in culture if only in the broad sense of a search for common ground.
- For many words at many points in their histories meaning is relatively stabilized thanks to the fact that many people accept and share a convention about what they mean in different contexts of use.
- These conventions can be undone, contested, and changed.
- Finally, it takes social work to enforce and police the meanings of words; work that never in the end

can ensure their meanings will not change or be contested.

Accordingly, language, for Gee (2015) is a multidimensional entity, and as it is discussed by him, “each and every language is composed of many sub-languages, (namely) social languages” (Gee, 2015, p. 90). Developing the notion of social languages are justified by Gee (2015) on the basis that any language event demands identity representation and practice manifestation. In other words, any individual has different identity representation in different contexts and his/her uses of language are manifested in terms of different practices in different contexts. Likewise, any individual uses different social languages in different contexts in order to represent his/her multiple identities. Gee (2015) concluded that there is a dialectical interaction among three variables of group membership—class, ethnicity, social role, cultural background, educational status, gender, and many others, social languages, and situational context—mediational tools, other participants, location, and others.

The concept of ideology, on the other hand, demands the notions of power and identity where the elites have “nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relationships” (Williams, 1985, pp. 155–156). Similarly, Gee (2015, p. 28) states that “what people in power believe is simply an expression of their controlling and powerful positions in the social hierarchy, and their desire, whether conscious or not, to retain and enhance their power”. Put it differently, what the people in power do is, in effect, a strategy for controlling and holding power, status, and identity. Henceforth, words are interpreted in cultural models and theories, which equip us with the appropriated strategies in handling the complexities we face with. Cultural models provide us the ideology and the lenses through which we see, describe, interpret and explain different phenomena in general and meaning making and literacy in particular. In the light of literacy and education, we are capable to “interrogate our cultural models and replace them with others, sometimes even with explicit and well developed theories” (Gee, 2015, p. 30).

Beside social languages, the notion of heteroglossia, that was originally developed by Mikail Bakhtin (1981, 1986), was regarded by Gee (2015) which refers to the fact that our uses of language even in a formal situation when we are dealing with literacy is a mixture of both spontaneous and scientific languages, i.e. language used in everyday communication and language used in academic and formal situations. Having justified the notion of heteroglossia, Gee (2015) refers to the fact that individuals interpret and reconstruct something new in the shape and form of the old things. Moreover, such an issue seems to work about literacy which is apparently mixing and interacting with speech, gesture, and many others. This argument was, in effect, raised by Holyoak and Thagard (1995) who emphasize the similarities as a way for interpretation and understanding. Therefore, as it is stated by Gee (2015, p. 95), different social languages or voices are “intermingled and juxtaposed” which go through similarities judgement for meaning making.

It is worth mentioning that meaning making is not a straightforward action, it involves considering a range of principles among which inclusion, and exclusion principles are worth mentioning. In this regard, Gee (2015, p. 99) argues, “when people differ significantly enough in the sets of words available to them, in the distinctions they are making, they are speaking different social languages”. It should be emphasized that there is no rigid boundary between social languages and they form a continuum. Having mentioned the three principles of exclusion, guessing, and context, Gee (2015) reminds “words have no meaning in and of themselves and by themselves apart from other words. They have meanings only relative to choices (by speakers and writers) and guesses (by hearers and readers) about other words, and assumptions about contexts”. He adds that choices, guesses and exclusions or inclusion are not working only based on chance and freely instead they are restricted by “the formal system that constitutes the language” (Gee, 2015, p. 102). Henceforth, choices, guesses, as well as inclusion and exclusions are virtually systematic and conscious and not routinized or conventionalized.

Meanwhile, the conventionalized and routinized language plays its own role. In other words, “everyday social activity requires us to leave most choices we make to the routine established by conventional habits, habits we have picked up as part of the socialization involved in acquiring the language, various social languages within it, and becoming members of our society” (Gee, 2015, p. 102). Gee (2015, p. 104) also argues about

distinction principle and cultural models that he considers as the “pictures of simplified worlds in which prototypical events unfold”. In fact, cultural models dictate and guide guesses, choices, exclusion and inclusion which are affected by particular beliefs and values.

It is worth stating that different cultural models which are used by a specific social group or even the society “share certain basic assumptions” that Gee (2015) refers to as “master myths of the social group or society” and “are often associated with certain characteristic metaphors or turns of phrase and thought in which the group or society encapsulates its favoured wisdom (Gee, 2015, p. 111). In addition, master myths lead to a dichotomy in which one cultural model is considered as “inevitable, natural, normal, practical, and common-sense,” and other cultural models as “odd, unnatural, and violations of common sense” (Gee, 2015, p. 111).

The pedagogical implications of the aforementioned issues, according to Gee (2015, p. 115), may be for “the teaching of language and literacy to people new to a culture and to non-mainstream students who wish to master the “standard,” “dominant” cultural models in the society, despite the fact that many of these models marginalize non-mainstream people”. Hence, acculturation, engagement, involvement, interaction and experiences in a social group, community or society are crucial for learning cultural models.

There is no doubt that native language, background knowledge, existing cultural models, values and perspectives interact and sometimes conflict with the cultural model to be learnt. In this regard, Gee (2015) argues that this kind of conflicts is *sin qua none* of learning and teaching processes. It means that teaching cultural models demands consciousness raising in order to raise the attention of students towards some dimensions of the presented cultural models. The teacher, then, can, at the right time, in the midst of the student’s on-going practice within the culture, and with culturally relevant materials in the classroom, point to the relevant data, focus the student’s attention on the relevant aspects of experience that will make the system, the network of cultural models, begin to gel. Similarly, literacy is a manifestation of human communication situated in social context that has implemented a vast variety of background knowledge, sociocultural factors and experience of involved participants. In this regard, Cicourel (1973, p. 9) argues that “as long as we continue to reify terms like ‘social structure’, ‘culture’ and ‘language’, we shall miss the contextual and cognitive significance of everyday social organization”.

The aforementioned discussion indicates that literacy is more than learning the formal properties, genres, and styles of other languages. Instead, literacy learning demands learning a new cultural model which constrain inclusion, exclusion, and guessing in the process of meaning making for which heteroglossia is also in play. Furthermore, group membership, social languages and situational context are interacting and complicating the literacy process. Having considered that literacy is mainly approached as a divisible skill apart from the micro and macro contexts such as basic skill approach, whole language approach, balance approach, and others (Doyle, Te Riele, Stratford, & Stewart, 2017). The researcher endeavours to provide an innovative program for teaching the literacy skills by considering the micro and macro context in which teaching is going to occur. In effect, the present literacy-teaching program is based on the new literacy studies and sociocultural tenets.

## **2. Method of the Study**

Following a quantitative quasi-experimental design, 100 Iraqi ELT students were selected as the participants of the study. The participants of the study were, in effect, three intact classes at the BA level. All the participants were raised and studied in Iraq and have experienced sanctions, war, and ISIS invasion. All the participants know the three languages of English, Kurdish and Arabic. Their ages were between 20 and 25. They were 45 male and 55 female students. The study was conducted in a 4.5-month period from December, 22, 2017 to May, 10, 2018.

Following two experimental and one control pretest, posttest design, the researcher provided different experimental treatment (instruction) to the groups. The experimental group 1 went under a balance method which is a traditional one, and the experimental group 2 under a combination of New Literacy Studies and Feuerstein’s instrumental Enrichment Program. The control group, on the other hand, received some kind of

placebo. In fact, the control group did not receive any instruction but the irrelevant materials. All the groups took the TOEIC Reading test once before going under any instruction and once again after going under instruction.

It is worth mentioning that the reading test was a mock test adapted based on the objectives of the study and its reliability was assessed through administering among a similar group (Iraqi ELT students) which showed an acceptable reliability index of .72 through Cronbach Alpha formula. In terms of validity, it seems to be acceptable due to the fact that it provides meaningful and appropriate interpretation and uses the study followed based on the judgement of content relevance to the domain and the construct validity claimed by such a standard test. The rationale for including two experimental and a control groups, on the other hand, is for gauging the threats to the internal and external validity.

Likewise, the materials for teaching to the both experimental groups were the same, i.e. Lindeck, Greenwood, and O'Sullivan's (2011) *Focusing on IELTS-Reading and Writing skills*. It should be clarified that the two groups were instructed in the same way except that the experimental group 2 received some strategical instruction due to the cultural context of Iraq and the status of Kurdish people there through implementing Feuerstein's instrumental Enrichment Program and the scaffolding provided to them.

### 3. Results

In this section, the results achieved by the study are presented followed by the discussion to answer the raised questions the study addressed.

#### 3.1 Descriptive Statistics

Having conducted the study, the researcher found the following results provided in table 1. As the table shows, the three groups had a similar mean score on the pretest between 42.50 and 42.70. The standard deviation of the three groups is between 1.50 and 1.80 which shows the groups are homogenous with low variability.

**Table 1**

*Descriptive Statistics: Pretest vs. Posttest*

	Items	<i>n</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
Pretest	experimental group 1	35	42.54	1.48
	experimental group 2	35	42.51	1.57
	control group	30	42.70	1.84
	Total	100	42.58	1.61
Posttest	experimental group 1	35	60.57	0.81
	experimental group 2	35	67.25	2.82
	control group	30	46.56	2.80
	Total	100	58.71	8.78

Considering the results of the posttest, on the other hand, shows different mean scores for different groups. Whereas, the experimental group 1 showed the mean score of a bit more than 60, the experimental group 2 showed the mean score a bit more than 67. The control group, on the other hand, showed an improved means score about 46.50, which can be attributed to practice effect or other factors. another point regarding the results indicated to the SD in which the experimental group 1 had the lowest variability—less than 1—and the other two groups, i.e. experimental group 2 and control group, showed the SD a bit lower than 3.

#### 3.2 Inferential Statistics

**ANOVA: A comparison between the groups' differences** - Having explored the three groups in terms of the pretest and posttest, the researcher makes a comparison between and among the groups. A one-way between subjects ANOVA was conducted to compare the effect of the teaching method on the reading comprehension in the three groups of experimental group 1 (a balance method), a, experimental group 2 (combination of New

Literacy Studies and Feuerstein's instrumental Enrichment Program), and the control group. The researchers found that there was a significant effect of the teaching method on the reading comprehension at the  $p < .000$  level for the three conditions [ $F(2, 97) = 664.28, p = .000$ ].

**T-test: Comparison between the pretest and posttest** - In a further step, the performance of the three groups were explored in terms of both the pretest and posttest in order to make a comparison between the groups' differences. To this end, we resorted to the independent sample t-tests as table 2 demonstrates.

**Table 2**

*Independent Samples Test: a comparison between pretest and posttest*

Items	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
exp1	35	60.57	0.81	-63.063	.000
exp2	35	67.25	2.82	-45.274	.000
ctrl	30	46.56	2.88	-6.188	.050

The table shows that the treatment was influential for both experimental groups. In fact, the table shows that  $p < .001$ , i.e.,  $p$  is very small, so we can conclude that the variance in pretest is significantly different from that of the posttest for both experimental groups. The table also shows that  $p$  is quite above the cut score, which means that the performances of the control group did not significantly differ in the pretest and posttest.

#### 4. Discussion and Conclusion

Having conducted the study, the researcher found that a sociocultural-based methodology may enhance reading comprehension among Iraqi EFL learners. Such a perspective is, in effect, interdisciplinary in which both perspectives of sociocultural theory and SLA have been followed. Hence, the rationale for conducting such a study is in line with the idea presented by some researchers such as Gao (2013). In other words, learning and development need to be approached in the larger social context through mediation, scaffolding and investment in which not only the learners, but significant others, the environment, setting, learners' background knowledge, their cultural, social and psychological belongings are being considered.

It is worth mentioning that the relationship between mind and body is not a dualistic issue but a dialectical one in which mind is socially appropriated, internalized and constructed within ZPD of different individuals (Poehner & Lantolf, 2013). It can be conceived that interaction, negotiation, significant others, shared purposes, and belonging along with contextual factors are crucial factors in forming, guiding and improving different skills among which reading comprehension is worth mentioning (Mantero, 2002). It should not be ignored that schema theory also highlights the role played by the background knowledge of different individuals.

Another point regarding the present study is that the participants in the experimental group 2 were recognized as a particular community group whose shared social and cultural identities influenced their motivation, performances, and collaboration with each other. The instruction, for the second experimental group, was very different due to the presented human and symbolic, as well as implicit and explicit mediation along with scaffolding provided to them. In fact, the second experimental group outperformed the other two groups due to their raised awareness, content-based instruction, learners' involvement, and the strategy instruction. Likewise, the results of the study may highlight Donato and MacCormick (1994) as well as Kozulin (2003) whose studies indicated to the significant role played by mediation in the learning processes. The results of the study also corroborate other researchers such as Gutierrez (2006), who showed that collaborative scaffolding improves learners' literacy skills.

The study demonstrated that scaffolding, collaborative learning, mediation, and ZPD are the crucial factors to be considered if we attempt to improve the education and bring about revolutionary education and what is interpreted as Kramsch' third space or Cook's multicompetence. It seems that the provided scaffolding opened up the opportunities for the Iraqi EFL learners to learn how to learn, to be autonomous and initiative. They were

also equipped with the appropriate strategies and techniques by which they got the capabilities to transform and restructure their knowledge.

The importance role played by scaffolding in improving literacy skills including reading skill in which reading is considered as a problem-solving activity proceeded through learner's involvement in the meaning-making process. It should not be ignored that reading comprehension is beyond the knowledge of vocabulary and structure and demands also the contextual information decoding, i.e., an interconnected network of semantic, syntactic, discoursal, and even, cultural and social information. Admittedly, the sociocultural-based methodology provides such capitals for the Iraqi EFL learners and stresses the investment theory. The results of the study indicates the complex nature of language and the process of language learning which is highly context-bound, contradictory, and involves the full engagement of the learners in terms of their investment, social capital, and their identities.

An important issue considered in the study was the role played by consciousness raising which is apparently a complex phenomenon considered by a vast variety of second language learning and teaching theories among which cognitive theories and sociocultural theory are worth mentioning (Ellis, 2009). Such an issue was considered and implemented in the process of reading comprehension to Iraqi EFL students. Here, we should distinguish between two different views to teaching any skill including reading one, namely, transmissive perspective and transformative perspective (Burns & Richards, 2009; Richards & Farrel, 2005; Freeman, 2016). Whereas the transmissive perspective regards education and development as the transmission of knowledge from the teachers to the students in order to be prepared in using language, the transformative perspective empathizes the learner's agency in the developmental processes (Burns & Richards, 2009; Richards & Farrel, 2005; Freeman, 2016). In other words, there is no straightforward application of the knowledge, skills, or strategies (for example of the collocational and prefabricate phrases) transmitted by the teacher to the students. It means that improving reading comprehension skills and strategies among Iraqi EFL students, as it is stated by the sociocultural perspective, is an on-going and progressive process which firstly is mediated by the social and external factors and then by the internal factors.

Accordingly, learners' performances, individual's characteristics in terms of their background knowledge (identity, cognitive structures, culture, etc.) and situational context (social, physical and cultural factors, other involved individual—teachers, classmates, etc.) are dialectically related (Johnson, 2006). Likewise, improving reading comprehension skills and strategies among Iraqi EFL students are derived and constructed by learners within their performance settings and circumstances and not through transmitting knowledge and strategies by the teachers out of the settings and circumstances of their circumstances. A closely related notion which is emphasized by the transformative perspective is the notion of learner's identity and cognition. In other words, a transformative perspective underscores that knowledge transmission is utilized for improving the reading comprehension skills and strategies in which also the role played by Iraqi EFL learners' identity and cognition as unpredictable, heterogeneous and flexible constructs (Burns & Richards, 2009; Clarke, 2008; Gregerson & McIntyre, 2017; Johnson & Golombek, 2011). It is important to realize that identity is a multidimensional construct affected by a vast variety of variables among which prior learning, courses taken, learning experiences, background knowledge, native language, emotion are worth mentioning (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004). It means that identity is an on-going and changing process which differs from one moment to another, or from one situation to another (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004; Burns & Richards, 2009). Hence, agency and responsibility of the learners should be put at the center of any learning course (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004; Burns & Richards, 2009).

Improving the skills and strategies related to reading comprehension among Iraqi EFL learners is not straightforward, it demands their cognitive change, and as a result their behavior change. Likewise, identity as continual emerging and becoming seems to be fluid, dynamic and contradictory influenced by a continuum of variables ranging from the psychological processes to the contextualized social processes (Burns & Richards, 2009). Hence, improving reading comprehension cannot be done solely through knowledge transmission without

any consideration of the learners' beliefs, perspectives, learning history, and their background knowledge. Learners' involvement and engagement seem to exert a powerful role that is to say students' consciousness and awareness of their identity are critical for their cognitive and behavioral change including reading comprehension (Burns & Richards, 2009). Henceforth, identity is continuously co-constructed in the situ using many resources including personal biography, interactional skills, knowledge, attitudes and social capital (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004). Put it in a simpler way, thinking, knowing, believing and acting are enacted in classroom contexts in a way that cannot be separated from identity formation. What learners know or do is part of their identity performance, which is continuously performed and transformed through interactions in classrooms. If we want to improve learners' reading comprehension, we need to consider the two critical dimensions of identity formations of the learners, i.e., personal histories (their past learning, cross-cultural experiences) and contextual factors (classroom and institutional culture, textbooks, curriculums, timetable, gender and social expectations) (Burns & Richards, 2009). To summarize context and identity play crucial mediational roles in any classroom interactions and Iraqi EFL learners and reading comprehension are not excepted.

The aforementioned issues demonstrate that reading comprehension in English as a foreign language is multifaceted with several interrelated constructs such as cognitive processes, social and psychological artefacts, identity, and cognition (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004; Burns & Richards, 2009; Freeman, 2016; Richards & Farrel, 2005). Accordingly, teaching the skills and strategies of reading comprehension demands considering students' cognitive processes, consciousness development, and their understandings transformation regarding themselves as EFL learners, regarding their classmates, and regarding their uses of language (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004; Burns & Richards, 2009; Freeman, 2016; Richards & Farrel, 2005).

A key point overlooked by the traditional and transmissive approaches to reading comprehension is that learning and development is enculturation and dynamic processes enacted through the existing social practices, which are restructured and transformed in situ. Such a perspective followed by the sociocultural theory emphasizes the agency of the learners themselves which means that learners' understanding of learning are merged with their perceptions about how to learn in their own instructional backgrounds as learners. It means that learners have deep and ingrained notions about the nature of language and learning. It seems to be crucial to differentiate spontaneous or every day and non-spontaneous or scientific concepts (Hawkins, 2004). Hence, the main objective of any educational course for reading comprehension is recommended to mediate between the learners' spontaneous and scientific concepts in order to enable them to move beyond their everyday experiences and allow them to function appropriately in the range of settings in which they may find themselves (Hawkins, 2004).

In other words, we need to equip the learners with the appropriate strategies in order to re-conceptualize and reconstruct different strategies and skills related to reading comprehension in facing new challenges. If we want to improve Iraqi EFL learners' strategies in reading comprehension, we need to mediate between their everyday concepts and their scientific ones which demands considering a mystification for which reproduction, enculturation, autonomy and originality are intertwined and crucial. Likewise, every day and scientific concepts are dialectically associated and transmitting knowledge related to reading comprehension skills and strategies cannot be the solution. The students need to link teachers' knowledge that is propositional and is transmitted by the teachers (scientific concepts) and experiential knowledge that is gathered through their own experiences (everyday concepts) (Hawkins, 2004). This linkage and mediation enables the learners to reconstruct and reshape their experiential knowledge and this reorganization creates a new lens for interpreting classroom practices (Hawkins, 2004).

When we talk about improving reading comprehension among the learners including Iraqi EFL learners, we should be aware that the internalization of the teachers' knowledge is not straightforward. In other words, internalizing reading skills and strategies are being processed and restructured through learners' cognitive processes which are context-based and meaningful and it is interpreted in their own voices. The aforementioned



issues also illustrate that there is no unique interpretation and application of reading comprehension skills and strategies presented by the teacher which means that learners' understanding is fluctuating from one context to another. Yet, the situation about second or foreign language teaching is different. Its difference is rooted in the fact that language is about content and instructional medium. Here, different perceptions of the students and scholars of the subject matter are involved. In other words, the relation between technology of subject matter (content) and the architecture of instruction and learning as well as development seem to be complicated (Hawkins, 2004).

Generally, a sociocultural perspective on reading comprehension highlights the socially situated nature of learning and exemplifies the cognitive and social processes that learners go through as they learn to use language including EFL reading comprehension. Likewise, we are concerned with the way cultural and historical issues affect the process of meaning making in time through the activity they take part (Freeman, 2016).

## 5. References

- Bakhtin, M. M. (1981). *The dialogic imagination: Four essays* (M. Holquist, Ed., C. Emerson & M. Holquist, Trans.). Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
- Bakhtin, M. M. (1986). *Speech genres and other late essays* (V. W. McGee, Trans.). Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
- Barton, D., & Hamilton, M. (1998). *Local literacies: Reading and writing in one community*. London: Routledge.
- Barton, D., Hamilton, M., & Ivanič, R. (Eds.). (2000). *Situated literacies: Reading and writing in context*. London: Routledge.
- Beijaard, D., Meijer, P. C., & Verloop, N. (2004). Reconsidering research on teachers' professional identity. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 20(2), 107-128. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2003.07.001>
- Burns, A., & Richards, J. (2009). *Second language teacher education*. NY: CUP.
- Cicourel, A. (1973). *Cognitive sociology: Language and meaning in social interaction*. Harmondworth: Penguin Education.
- Cook-Gumperz J. (Ed.) (1986). *The social construction of literacy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Donato, R., & McCormick, D. (1994). A sociocultural perspective on language learning strategies: The role of mediation. *The Modern Language Journal*, 78(4), 453-464. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1994.tb02063.x>
- Doyle, K., Te Riele, K., Stratford, E., & Stewart, S. (2017). *Teaching literacy: Review of literature*. Hobart: Peter Underwood Centre.
- Ellis, R. (2009). Corrective feedback and teacher development. *L2 Journal*, 1(1), 3-18. <https://doi.org/10.21832/9781783095056-003>
- Freeman, D. (2016). *Educating second language teachers*. London: OUP.
- Gao, Y. (2013). Incorporating sociocultural theory into English reading instruction: A unit plan for Chinese EFL learners. *US-China Foreign Language*, 11(11), 859-869. <https://doi.org/10.17265/1539-8080/2013.11.006>
- Gee, J. (1990). *Social linguistics and literacies*. London: Flamer Press.
- Gee, J. (2015). *Social linguistics and literacies: Ideology in discourses*. New York: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315722511>
- Gregersen, T., & MacIntyre, P. (2017). *Innovative practices in language teacher education: Spanning the spectrum from intra- to inter-personal profession development*. NY: Springer. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-51789-6>
- Gutierrez, K. (2006). White innocence: A framework and methodology for rethinking educational discourse and inquiry. *International Journal of Learning*, 12(10), 223-229. <https://doi.org/10.18848/1447-9494/CGP/v12i10/48224>
- Hawkins, M. (2004). *Language teacher and teacher education: A sociocultural approach*. Cleveland: Multilingual

- Matters Limited. <https://doi.org/10.21832/9781853597657>
- Heath, S. B. (1983). *Ways with words: Language, life, and work in communities and classrooms*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511841057>
- Holyoak, K. J., & Thagard, P. (1995). *Mental leaps: Analogy in creative thought*. Cambridge: Bradford Book.
- Johnson, K. E. (2006). The sociocultural turn and its challenges for second language teacher education. *Tesol Quarterly*, 40(1), 235-257. <https://doi.org/10.2307/40264518>
- Johnson, K., & Golombek, P. (2011). *Research on second teacher education: A sociocultural perspective on professional development*. NY: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.379>
- Kozulin, A. (2003). Psychological tools and mediated learning. In A. Kozulin, B. Gindis, V. S. Ageyev, & S. M. Miller (Eds.), *Vygotsky's educational theory in cultural context* (pp. 15-38). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511840975.003>
- Lindeck, J., Greenwood, J., & O'Sullivan, K. (2011). *Focusing on IELTS-reading and writing skills*. South Yarra, Macmillan Education.
- Mantero, M. (2002). Bridging the gap: Discourse in text-based foreign language classrooms. *Foreign Language Annals*, 35(4), 437-456. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.2002.tb01883.x>
- Poehner, M. E., & Lantolf, J. P. (2013). Bringing the ZPD into the equation: Capturing L2 development during Computerized Dynamic Assessment (C-DA). *Language Teaching Research*, 17(3), 323-342. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168813482935>
- Prinsloo, M., & Baynham, M. (2008). Renewing literacy studies. In M. Prinsloo & M. Baynham (Eds.), *Literacies, global and local* (pp. 1-16). NY: John Benjamin's Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1075/aals.2.01pri>
- Richards, J., & Farrel, T. (2005). *Professional development for language teachers: Strategies for teacher learning*. NY: CUP. <https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9780511667237>
- Scollon, R., & Scollon, S. W. (1981). *Narrative, literacy, and face in interethnic communication*. Norwood: Ablex. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0047404500010289>
- Scribner, S., & Cole, M. (1981). *The psychology of literacy*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0047404500010101>
- Williams, R. (1985). *Keywords: A vocabulary of culture and society* (Rev. ed.). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.