DOKTORI DISSZERTÁCIÓ

# THE USE OF LEARNER READING ALOUD IN THE ENGLISH LESSON: A LOOK AT THE MICRO AND MACRO LEVELS OF ORAL READING

HUSZTI ILONA

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Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem Pedagógiai és
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Eötvös Loránd University

Faculty of Pedagogy and Psychology

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

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LANGUAGE PEDAGOGY PhD Program
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Dr. Major Éva, PhD

Budapest, 19 December, 2007.

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## Chapter I. Introduction, Rationale and Overview of the Thesis

Transcarpathia (Zakarpattia – Закарпаття) is one of Ukraine's twenty-four administrative regions. It is situated in south-western Ukraine, with a population of 1 254 614 people among whom there are 151 516 Hungarians living in a minority in the region[*] (see the map of the region in Appendix 1).

This minority has its system of education with 106 Hungarian schools which form an integral part of the country's educational system (see Section 2.1).

All of these schools teach at least three languages: Hungarian as the learners' mother tongue or first language—L1, Ukrainian as the official language of the country—second language or L2 for the learners, and a foreign language—FL. This is either English, or German, or French. Recent tendencies show greater preference in favour of English. It means that most of the Transcarpathian Hungarian schools teach English as a foreign language. It has started to push out French and German in those schools where teaching English was not included in the curriculum (Fábián, Huszti, & Lizák, 2004).

Till the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the leading and most widely applied foreign language teaching method was the Grammar-Translation Approach to language teaching. Since then, FL teaching has been realized with the help of the communicative method, although some remains of the 'old traditions' (like reading aloud) are still present in the schools

In Transcarpathian Hungarian schools, it is common practice among English teachers to apply the technique of learner reading aloud in the English lessons (Huszti, 2002, 2003a, 2003b). Some researchers (e.g. Helgesen and Gakuin, 1993) are against the use of this technique in its 'traditional way' (see Section 3.3), but their claim is not grounded on any empirical research findings. Because the traditional learner oral reading is a widely applied technique in the lessons of English in Transcarpathian Hungarian schools, it deserves some attention on the part of the research community, and the focus of this attention should lie in collecting empirical evidence to support or refute the assertions proposed in the academic literature on the issue of oral reading. This was one of the main rationales for the research described in this thesis.

The need for conducting the present study also arose from the absence of an empirical investigation examining Hungarian learners' English reading miscues in Transcarpathian

[*] This information is based on the 2001 Ukrainian census data (Molnár & Molnár D., 2005).

Hungarian schools. Because this topic is not researched in an adequate way, this research is believed to fill the gap.

This study was further justified by a desire to explore the application of the technique of analysing learners' reading miscues in a non-native context.

The basic aim of reading is comprehension of the text that someone has read. By investigating how miscues appear in the classroom in real learning situations and not in research conditions, how they help or hinder learners' understanding of the text, and how teachers respond to learners' miscues in the classroom, it was intended to get deeper insights into the macro level of miscues. The examination of miscues via the diagnostic technique of miscue analysis was expected to help better understand their micro level, i.e. their type, frequency, and quality. Also, this scrutiny seemed to promise a good opportunity for establishing whether a relationship existed between reading aloud and reading comprehension, and of what kind it was.

The final motivation for the study concerned the author's desire to gather empirical data on the way in which English teachers responded to learners' miscues. The research findings and implications were hoped to contribute both to the knowledge about reading in general, and to the methodology of teaching English reading in Transcarpathian Hungarian schools in particular.

The present thesis on learners' miscues is comprised of eight chapters followed by two sections containing the references and the appendices.

*Chapter 1* is an introductory part which gives the rationale for carrying out the research described in the thesis and presents a brief overview of the dissertation.

*Chapter 2* describes the context in which the research was conducted. It gives a summary of the educational system in Ukraine, and outlines the state of teaching English as a FL in Transcarpathian Hungarian schools. Also, Section 3 explains the general criteria for evaluating learners' educational achievements in FLs for the reader to understand what standards are used when learners are evaluated in the school. The last section in Chapter 2 describes the English textbook that is most widely used in Transcarpathian Hungarian schools. The aim of this description is to introduce the textbook that is used for teaching reading in English to learners in the given schools. It suggests the inappropriateness of the book for application in modern language teaching. The section also reports on some teacher's notes based on the textbook. The existence of these notes implies the ineffectiveness of the book with the help of which the learner participants of this investigation learned to read in English.

*Chapter 3* presents a review of the academic literature on the main issues that the dissertation covers. First, various reading definitions and reading models are summarized. Then, oral reading as a bottom-up model is discussed focusing on the pros and cons of its use in the English classroom. Another topic central to the thesis is analysed in the literature review: miscues and miscue analysis. Separate sections deal with research applying miscue analysis with native and non-native learners. The last section in this review examines how the language teacher responds to learners' miscues.

Based on the literature review and the rationales for the present study, the hypotheses and the research questions are presented, explained and justified in *Chapter 4*.

*Chapter 5* presents the research methodology of the dissertation study. First, it speaks about the participants of the study—learners, teachers, and educational managers; second, it introduces and depicts the research instruments—a reading proficiency test and its results, texts to read for the learners, interviews with pupils, teachers, and educational managers, comprehension measures, classroom observations, and curriculum analysis. This chapter also contains a report on the piloting of the research tools—texts, interview protocols, and comprehension tests. Finally, the chapter gives details about the data collection procedures and the methods of data analysis.

*Chapter 6* informs the reader about the findings of the study. In Section 1 interview results are presented; Section 2 gives the details of classroom observations, while Section 3 is a description of the findings of curriculum analysis. In Section 4 the results of the main miscue study are described. It first presents a description of the learners' reading behaviour based on the researcher's fieldnotes; second, an analysis of learners' miscues committed during the reading aloud recordings are described; third, miscues of individual learners are presented. Section 5 of Chapter 6 gives the results of two comprehension tests that were applied to measure the learners' understanding when reading aloud—retelling and comprehension questions procedures.

*Chapter 7* discusses all the findings of the dissertation study in relation to the initial research intentions and research questions presented in Chapter 4. Interpretations of the results can also be found in this part of the thesis.

*Chapter 8* is the part of the thesis which summarises the results, draws the conclusions of the study, and points out the main implications of the research. The implications focus on the contribution of the dissertation investigation to the field of reading research and instruction, i.e. the teaching of English language reading in Transcarpathian Hungarian schools. The limitations of the study are also presented in this chapter.

The final two parts of the thesis contain the list of references, and include seventeen appendices, for example, a map of Transcarpathia, a copy of the proficiency test, research instruments such as texts, interview protocols and the classroom observation sheet, worksheet copies with learner miscues, etc.

# Chapter 2 Context of the Research

## 2.1 The Educational System in Ukraine and Transcarpathia in Particular, and Teaching English in Transcarpathian Hungarian Schools

This section aims to introduce the school system in Ukraine and the state of English language teaching in Transcarpathian Hungarian schools in order to inform the reader about the background and understand the context of the present study better.

In Ukraine, children start their compulsory education at the age of six. At this age they enter the 1st class of the starting school. Then learners continue their studies in the basic school which ends in Form 9 when the pupils are fifteen years old. The last stage of compulsory schooling is secondary education comprising Forms 10 and 11. Learners leave the secondary school at the age of seventeen. Table 1 presents the system of compulsory education in Ukraine* (see www.mon.gov.ua ).

| Age of learners | Classes and Forms | Levels of Education | Name of school stage |
|---|---|---|---|
| 6-7 | 1 | Lower Primary | Starting school |
| 7-8 | 2 | | |
| 8-9 | 3 | | |
| 9-10 | 4 | | |
| 10-11 | 5 | Upper Primary | Basic school |
| 11-12 | 6 | | |
| 12-13 | 7 | | |
| 13-14 | 8 | | |
| 14-15 | 9 | | |
| 15-16 | 10 | Secondary | Secondary school |
| 16-17 | 11 | | |

**TABLE 1. Compulsory education levels in Ukraine**

Accordingly, the secondary schools where the research described in this thesis was conducted consist of three departments: lower primary or starting (Classes 1-4), upper primary or basic (Forms 5-9), and secondary (Forms 10-11). The above data are based on the Law of Ukraine about Education (Education Law of Ukraine, 1996). Further details about the Ukrainian education system can be found in Chapter 1 of Beregszászi, Csernicskó, and Orosz (2001).

* The terms associated with academic institutions and education are taken from a Ukrainian and English terminology list prepared by Puffalt & Starko (2004).

Hungarian education started in the 1944/1945 academic year in Transcarpathia (Orosz & Csernicskó, 1999). The ratio of schools with Hungarian language of instruction in the school system of Transcarpathia is about the same as the ratio of Hungarians living in this region, i.e. about 12% (Molnár & Molnár D, 2005). There are 106 Hungarian schools in Transcarpathia among which there are 34 secondary schools (comprising primary and secondary departments, Forms 1-11), 52 primary schools (Forms 1-9), 11 lower primary schools (Classes 1-4), 7 lyceums (Forms 10-12), 2 eight-year grammar schools (Forms 5-12), and 2 vocational schools (Forms 10-11) (Huszti, 2004a, 2004b; Orosz, 2007). Lyceums are mainly three-year church-supported secondary schools. Vocational schools are schools where learners can get some kind of professional training besides general secondary education; for example, students can get the qualifications of tailors or dressmakers, farmers, cooks, confectioners, waiters, etc.

67 (64.4%) of the Hungarian schools teach English as a compulsory foreign language (data obtained from the Transcarpathian Hungarian Pedagogical Association). Foreign language teaching in Ukraine's schools used to start in Form 5, but in the 2003/2004 school year due to the reform of foreign language teaching in Ukraine it was first introduced in Class 2 of primary schools. Since then foreign language teaching has been taught starting from Class 2 as a compulsory school subject. The situation concerning FL teaching was twofold: in the 2003/2004 academic year there were classes which began learning a FL at the age of seven and classes that started this process at the age of 10.

Table 2 shows the number of weekly hours spent on teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) in different forms of the Ukrainian secondary school in the 2003/2004 and the 2006/2007 school years in Hungarian schools of Transcarpathia. As the table below indicates, there is some improvement in terms of the number of lessons spent on foreign language teaching weekly.

An investigation was carried out (Fábián, Huszti, & Lizák, 2004) with the aim to survey the situation of English language teaching in Transcarpathian Hungarian schools. The authors' objective was to describe the circumstances in which English language teaching was taking place, examine the problems that most frequently occurred and suggest possible solutions. A questionnaire was designed and administered to 48 teachers of English in 39 schools. It asked about the English textbook supply of the teachers' schools, teachers' opinions about the English textbooks in use (Plakhotnyk & Martynova, 1995, 1996, 1997a, 1997b; Plakhotnyk, Martynova, & Zakharova, 1996), methods and techniques the teachers

used in their practice, teachers' main problems during teaching and their perceived solutions, etc.

| 2003/2004 | | 2006/2007 | |
|---|---|---|---|
| FORM | HOURS PER WEEK | FORM | HOURS PER WEEK |
| 2 | — | 2 | 1 |
| 3 | — | 3 | 2 |
| 4 | — | 4 | 2 |
| 5 | 3 | 5 | 3 |
| 6 | 3 | 6 | 3 |
| 7 | 2 | 7 | 2 |
| 8 | 2 | 8 | 2 |
| 9 | 2 | 9 | 2 |
| 10 | 1 | 10 | 2 |
| 11 | 1 | 11 | 2 |
| 12 | — | 12 | 2 |

**TABLE 2. The number of weekly foreign language lessons in Transcarpathian Hungarian schools before the FL teaching reform and after it**

The most important findings of this questionnaire survey suggested that the biggest problems in lower primary classes were the lack of appropriate textbooks, and large heterogeneous classes of 26-27 pupils[*]. These difficulties also continued to be present in the upper primary forms, although teachers mentioned the learners' low motivation levels in addition. In the secondary schools all the problems referred to above were cumulated except for the lack of motivation. Among the teachers' suggestions for solving the problems one could find more hours of English per week, supplying the schools with appropriate and usable English textbooks, and having less than ten learners in one group. Concerning the larger number of weekly hours spent on foreign language teaching, Alderson (2000b) concludes that if the quality of teaching is bad, more hours a week will worsen the situation, so the effectiveness of teaching is more the question of quality than quantity.

To sum up, some positive process has begun concerning English teaching in Transcarpathian Hungarian schools, more useful and usable English textbooks have been published (Karpiuk, 2002, 2003), although not all he Hungarian schools in Transcarpathia are

[*] In Ukraine, a class can be divided into two groups in the English lessons, if there are more than 27 learners in it (Fábián, Huszti, & Lizák, 2005; Kovalenko & Kudina, 2005).

provided with them in the appropriate number (Bárányné, Fábián, & Huszti, 2007). However, this process towards improvement is relatively slow.

## 2.2 Educational Management in Transcarpathia

In Ukraine, Transcarpathia included, primary and secondary education is mainly realized in government-supported schools of different levels of accreditation. These schools are supervised by the educational departments of the local state authorities. In the whole country, there are 24 regions called oblasts and the autonomous republic of the Crimea. In all these oblasts, there are regional authorities with their regional departments of education. Transcarpathia as one of the regions is subdivided into thirteen administrative districts, all of which have their local authorities.

A number of different educational managers—called methodologists—work as managers and consultants in the thirteen district educational departments; there is only one such person responsible for foreign languages in each district department. Their main responsibilities include supervising the process of teaching foreign languages in their districts, organising professional meetings and consultation sessions for teachers of foreign languages, and guaranteeing the quality of foreign language teaching in the local schools. These are mainly highly-qualified and experienced teachers of foreign languages themselves, with a minimum teaching experience of ten years.

## 2.3 Criteria for Evaluating Learners' Educational Achievements in Foreign Languages

The official Bulletin of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine in the article *About the application of the new twelve-point scale in evaluating learners' educational achievements* (Criteria, 2001, p. 15) published the criteria for evaluating learners' educational achievements in foreign languages. They explain how the teacher should evaluate learners' achievements—i.e. what mark the teacher should give—on a scale of twelve points. It is claimed that these criteria are based on "European standards" (ibid.).

Table 3 presents the criteria in full. The criteria have been translated from Ukrainian into English by the author of this thesis; the criteria refer only to the educational achievements in reading in a foreign language as a receptive skill because the other three language skills—speaking, writing, and listening—do not constitute the subject matter of the present thesis.

| Levels of educational achievements | Mark | Criteria of educational achievements |
|---|---|---|
| **I. Starting** (Unsatisfactory marks) | 1 | The learner can understand familiar names, very simple words and phrases. |
| | 2 | The learner can understand familiar names, very simple words and phrases, e.g. in notices, or advertisements. |
| | 3 | The learner can read very simple and short texts. |
| **II. Medium** (Satisfactory marks) | 4 | The learner can find information (necessary for him) in advertisements, restaurant menus, timetables, and understand short and simple personal letters. |
| | 5 | The learner can understand easy texts written in conversational English about their everyday life. |
| | 6 | The learner can understand a description of actions, expressions of feelings / emotions and wishes in personal letters. |
| **III. Sufficient** (Good marks) | 7 | The learner can read texts on modern topics in which authors take certain positions or express certain views. |
| | 8 | The learner understands modern literary prose. |
| | 9 | The learner understands literary texts and can retell them. |
| **IV. High** (Excellent marks) | 10 | The learner understands texts, even if they do not belong to the sphere of the learner's competence. |
| | 11 | The learner reads various forms of written speech with ease |
| | 12 | The learner reads various texts with different structure and language means easily |

**TABLE 3. Criteria for evaluating learners' educational achievements**

In fact, the criteria do not focus on the type of reading—oral or silent. Nor is it explained clearly what is meant by some of the terms in the criteria; for example, for Mark 3 the learner should be able to read 'simple and short' texts but what these terms actually cover seems to be left for the reader or teacher to decide. Another area that is not clarified properly is the 'high level' of educational achievements. According to the criteria proposed by the Ministry, for Marks 11 and 12 (the highest marks a learner can get today in a school in

Ukraine) it is enough to be able to read various types of texts with ease, but it is not obligatory to understand them, at least, understanding is not emphasised as a criterion.

The criteria for evaluating learners' achievements in foreign language reading for mark 9, for example, prescribe that children should understand literary texts and also, they should be able to retell the plot of such texts. Unfortunately, it is not explained exactly what is meant by the term 'literary texts'—e.g. how many words it has and what kind of vocabulary it should contain. Likewise, in the criterion for mark 10 it is not defined how the teacher should interpret the phrase 'texts, even if they do not belong to the sphere of the learner's competence'. Obviously, these criteria have many deficiencies and it is not surprising that teachers do not follow them in practice (Fábián, Huszti, & Lizák, 2004, 2005).

## 2.4 The Most Widely Applied English Textbook in Transcarpathian Hungarian Schools and the Description of Some Teacher's Notes to This Textbook

### 2.4.1 General Description

In this section of the thesis, a general description followed by a detailed analysis of the so-called Plakhotnyk-textbook for Form 6—the target population of the research described in this thesis—is given in order to better understand the way the learners study the English language and particularly, how and with the help of what written material their reading skills are developed.

In the primary and secondary educational establishments, supported by the government of Ukraine, it is possible to apply only those textbooks which are officially permitted to be used and contain the notice 'Recommended by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine'[*]. This order also applies to the textbooks in foreign languages. The order of the educational minister also lists a number of books in the section under the title 'Additional textbooks and teaching resources' that can be used as alternatives to the basic textbooks. The use of these additional manuals in primary and secondary schools is not prohibited provided the requirements of the National Curriculum for Foreign Languages (1998, 2001) are fulfilled. These are mainly textbooks by British publishers, such as Oxford University Press, Cambridge University Press, Longman Pearson Education, Macmillan Heinemann, and Express Publishing (Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, 2000).

The official English language textbook in Transcarpathian schools is the series of textbooks compiled by professors Plakhotnyk and Martynova (1995, 1996, 1997a, 1997b) and

[*] Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, Order No. 170, issued on 2/06/97

Plakhotnyk, Martynova and Zakharova (1996), but which are widely known as the Plakhotnyk-books. These are also used in the seven schools from which Form 6 learners were selected for the miscue study. In these schools, no additional English textbooks were used, except for School B—an urban Hungarian school with excellent reputation—where a course book by Evans and Dooley (1999) was in use.

The Form 6 textbook follows the traditions of the textbook 'English for Form 5' (Plakhotnyk & Martynova, 1995) in that it teaches the learners to read in English according to different reading rules. First, it says that in English four different syllable types exist (Arakhin, 1968; Siomova, 1998): 1. closed, i.e. consonant + vowel + consonant, 2. open, i.e. vowel + consonant + vowel, 3. vowel followed by the letter 'R', 4. vowel followed by the letter cluster 'RE'. In these syllable types the stressed vowel should be read differently. These rules are also presented in the inside front and back covers of the textbook (see Appendix 2).

The textbook starts with a revision unit, subdivided into nine sections called 'lessons', when the learners review the language material learnt in Form 5. This is followed by seven units covering topics like 'My working day', 'My day off', 'My town / village', 'School subjects', etc. The units are not given any titles. The last lesson in each unit is titled 'The Control Lesson' during which testing and assessing learners' knowledge takes place. In general, the units contain 6 to 22 lessons. Table 4 shows the number of lessons in each unit.

| Units | Number of lessons per unit |
|---|---|
| REVISION UNIT | 9 |
| UNIT 1 | 10 |
| UNIT 2 | 15 |
| UNIT 3 | 19 |
| UNIT 4 | 10 |
| UNIT 5 | 22 |
| UNIT 6 | 9 |
| UNIT 7 | 6 |

**TABLE 4 Number of lessons in the units of *English for Form 6***

After the units, there is a section with nineteen texts for the learners to read at home, titled 'Texts for home reading'. The book also contains a mini English-Ukrainian vocabulary with 549 entries which is meant to help learners do the numerous translation tasks. The first lesson in each unit starts with a box where all the unfamiliar vocabulary items that learners can come across in the unit are given. Then, below such boxes, a list of these new words is presented together with their transcriptions and Ukrainian equivalents. The task of the

learners is to read the words and word combinations together with their translations and then put them down into their own vocabulary notebooks*, for instance, exercise 1a and 1b on page 38, Plakhotnyk & Martynova, 1996. On some occasions, some black-and-white cartoons are used to explain the meanings of certain words. The Ukrainian translation of the words is always written under the pictures.

The exercises in a unit are numbered successively; for example, in Unit 2, which contains fifteen lessons, there are 83 exercises, the last three—exercises 81-83—being the ones of the Control Lesson (Plakhotnyk & Martynova, 1996, pp. 59-60). The tasks aim to develop: reading, writing—mainly making up sentences, speaking—most often tasks for practising learners' monologic speech, and translation. Tasks for listening are not dealt with in the book as this very important language skill does not constitute the focus of attention of the textbook in question.

The instructions in the tasks are usually double, prescribing two tasks at the same time. Table 5 shows how often a task appears in Unit 2. From Table 5 it is evident that the exercises in a typical unit of the Plakhotnyk-textbook for Form 6 (Plakhotnyk & Martynova, 1996) do not deal with developing learners' listening skills as no exercise / instruction tells them to listen to a recorded text and do tasks based on that text. What Table 5 does show is that the skills most frequently involved in activities are translation from and into English, reading word combinations, sentences and texts, monologic speaking skills—when no communication occurs, the learner speaks just to the teacher but nobody reacts to his speech, not even the teacher—writing word combinations, sentences and compositions, and dialogic speaking skills—when one learner asks questions from another one. So, although in ten tasks of Unit 2 learners' speaking skills are involved, the instructions in such activities only require the learners to perform monologues, instead of dialogues and real-life communication. For instance, a typical instruction is 'Speak about the house of your friend who lives in a village' (see Instruction 24 in Table 5) (Plakhotnyk & Martynova, 1996, p. 58).

Writing tasks mainly involve copying exercises from the textbook, or constructing grammatically correct sentences from substitution tables (see Instruction 5 in Table 5). There are some free writing tasks, but all of them occur in The Control Lessons, where the instruction is usually 'Write a composition on a topic out of three. Your teacher will tell you which exactly. Topics: My town, My village, My street' (see Instruction 19 in Table 5) (Plakhotnyk & Martynova, 1996, p. 79).

* A vocabulary notebook of a learner contains all the unfamiliar English words, their transcriptions and Hungarian translations written in three columns by the learners.

| No | Instruction | Skills involved | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Read the words and word combinations together with their translations. | Reading | 8 | 9.63 |
| 2 | Read the words and word combinations and translate them into Ukrainian. | Reading and Translating | 4 | 4.81 |
| 3 | Make up sentences with the highlighted words and phrases orally. | Monologic Speaking | 3 | 3.61 |
| 4 | Read the sentences paying attention to their structure. | Reading | 1 | 1.2 |
| 5 | Make up questions with the help of the substitution table in a written form and put them to your partner. | Writing and Dialogic Speaking | 1 | 1.2 |
| 6 | Answer the following questions orally. | Monologic Speaking | 2 | 2.4 |
| 7 | Read the words and word combinations in English in 40 seconds. | Reading | 3 | 3.61 |
| 8 | Cover the left side of the exercise (Ukrainian) and translate the word combinations and sentences into English. | Translating | 3 | 3.61 |
| 9 | Do exercise 8—i.e. covering one side and translating into English or Ukrainian—in 45 seconds. | Translating | 7 | 8.43 |
| 10 | Speak about your … (parents, relatives, house/flat, town/village, etc.). | Monologic Speaking | 4 | 4.81 |
| 11 | Look at the cartoons and answer the questions. | Monologic Speaking | 2 | 2.4 |
| 12 | Read the questions in English and answer them. | Reading | 2 | 2.4 |
| 13 | Cover the left-hand column of the exercise, translate the questions into English and ask your partner to answer them. | Translating and Dialogic Speaking | 2 | 2.4 |
| 14 | Ask your partner about … [a topic is given]. | Dialogic Speaking | 6 | 7.22 |
| 15 | Cover the left-hand column of the previous exercise, read the Ukrainian word combinations and sentences and write them down in English. | Translating and Writing | 3 | 3.61 |
| 16 | Cover the left-hand column of the exercise, read the Ukrainian questions and translate them into English in 30 seconds. | Translating | 2 | 2.4 |
| 17 | Do exercise 15 according to the teacher's dictation in Ukrainian. = Teacher dictates Ukrainian words or phrases, learners put them down in English. | Translating and Writing | 3 | 3.61 |
| 18 | Put as many questions as you can to the given statements in a written form. | Writing | 3 | 3.61 |
| 19 | Write about … [a topic is given] (in two cases, a list of items is provided what to write about). | Writing | 5 | 6.02 |
| 20 | Read the text and answer the questions after it orally. | Reading and Monologic Speaking | 4 | 4.81 |
| 21 | Describe the picture in a written form. | Writing | 5 | 6.02 |
| 22 | Translate the word combinations into Ukrainian and write them down. | Translating | 2 | 2.4 |
| 23 | Translate the word combinations into English and write them down. | Translating | 4 | 4.81 |
| 24 | Speak about … [a topic is given]. | Monologic Speaking | 3 | 3.61 |
| 25 | Read the text and retell what it is about. | Reading and Monologic Speaking | 1 | 1.2 |
| | | **TOTAL** | **83** | **100** |

**TABLE 5 Types of tasks and their frequency in Unit 2**

Many exercises focus on translation. The most common types of tasks are to find the equivalents of several Ukrainian sentences in the English texts, or simply, to translate Ukrainian sentences into English, or vice versa. Another type of translation task is when the given text is a longer one consisting of three or more paragraphs, and learners have to translate the first, the second, etc. or the last paragraph. It is not indicated whether this translation should be done orally or in a written form.

The central and most crucial part of the book is devoted to reading. All the units are full of reading tasks. The most common instruction is 'Read the words and word combinations together with their translations'—e.g. exercise 27, Plakhotnyk & Martynova, 1996, p. 46—or 'Read the text and answer the questions that follow'—e.g. exercise 28, Plakhotnyk & Martynova, 1996, p. 46.

When the task is to read a text, it is nowhere in the book stated what type of reading is required from learners: oral or silent reading. However, classroom observations showed that most teachers asked their learners to read such texts aloud and then immediately translate them into Hungarian (see Section 6.2). These observations support the findings in the teacher interviews and those of the retrospective learner interviews in which both the teachers and the learners state that after reading aloud the learners usually translate the texts into Hungarian.

A further reading activity type is to read a given set of words and expressions aloud within a definite time limit, usually between 25 to 70 seconds, depending on the size of the set, or the length of the list of words. As the interviews with educational managers and teachers and the analysis of official educational documents proved, this type of reading for a definite time was not a requirement set by the National Curriculum (1998); nonetheless, this type of activity is placed in the book.

### 2.4.2 Language Content and the Control Lessons

It is obvious from the contents that the book is based on the Grammar Translation approach to language teaching (c.f. Larsen-Freeman, 1986; Richards and Rodgers, 2001). For example, grammar structures are taught deductively, i.e. first, the rules are presented in Ukrainian in so-called 'Grammar Boxes' (e.g. the formation and use of the 'Present Indefinite Tense', Plakhotnyk & Martynova, 1996, p. 66) and then some simple examples are given to illustrate the rule.

One of the book's preferred vocabulary revising tasks is the following: there are two columns beside each other. In the first one, English vocabulary items are given—words, phrases, and short sentences, in the second column the Ukrainian equivalents of the English

vocabulary items are presented. The task comprises covering the left-hand column with the English words and phrases, reading the words and phrases in the right-hand column in Ukrainian, and translating them back into English.

The activities in the textbook do not demand much interaction among learners. They require the learners to do individual work most of the time, although in one order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (2001) it is declared that teachers should move from teacher-centred classrooms towards learner-centred ones, by incorporating new patterns of interaction, using more pair work and group work activities.

Exercises for home work are marked with an asterisk (*) throughout the book.

All of the Control Lessons in the seven units in *English for Form 6* (Plakhotnyk & Martynova, 1996) contain the same three exercises. The first one is to translate the 20 to 40 word combinations into Ukrainian. The second one is a reverse task; here the translation of words and phrases should be done from Ukrainian into English. The final task is a free writing task where the learners have to write some information on a topic they have already learnt, for example, 'My family', 'The street I live in', 'My classroom', etc.

### 2.4.3 Problems with the Plakhotnyk-Books

From the above description it is clear that these widely known books are out-of-date in the first decade of the 21st century: they do not meet the needs and requirements of modern foreign language teaching methodology, when one of the most important aims of a language textbook is to be communicative. The problems one can find with this series of books are manifold: it is not only the method that is inappropriate, but also its content and appearance. The book (Plakhotnyk & Martynova, 1996) presents all the tasks as obligatory for every learner, not taking into account the fact that there are no homogeneous classes where learners have the same abilities; on the contrary, classes are heterogeneous with mixed ability children (Oxford & Ehrman, 1993; Ur, 1996; Allen, 2000). For them, it would be more useful to be given exercises and tasks which are graded according to their level of knowledge, so that every child was able to do the tasks and get a feeling of achievement, which can motivate such learners and make them want to achieve more success. There are some very good examples of such books published abroad, for example *Snapshot* (Abbs, Freebairn, & Barker, 1998) and *World Club* (Harris & Mower, 2000). It is sad that these course books are not available in Transcarpathian Hungarian schools as basic or supplementary courses, although the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine does not prohibit their use.

Unfortunately, the language in the Plakhotnyk-book under analysis (Plakhotnyk & Martynova, 1996) does not seem authentic, nor realistic; on the contrary, it gives the impression that the language is not true-to-life; the content is not likely to be interesting for twelve-year-old children because the topics in *English 6* do not relate to their lives. It does not challenge the learners intellectually. Regrettably, there are no additional materials to accompany the pupil's book—no workbook, cassette, or separate teacher's book is available—that could make the work of both the teacher and the learners easier. It is true that lately some methodology notes have been published in a professional journal in Ukraine, written by an American Peace Corps volunteer in Ukraine to help the work of the teachers who use this textbook in their teaching (Seamster, 2004, 2005). These are very useful; nevertheless, they cannot compensate for the lack of a comprehensive teacher's book. Thus, the textbook cannot be labelled teacher-friendly or learner-friendly.

The book's appearance is neither appealing, nor attractive because the whole book is black and white, there are no pictures or photos in it, only some cartoons are used as illustrations. For this reason, the whole design appears dull.

These are the problems that many English teachers in Transcarpathian Hungarian schools complain about (Fábián, Huszti, Lizák, 2004, 2005; Huszti, 2004b, 2005). The findings showed that teachers of English were not satisfied with the Plakhotnyk–books because they believed that the books were not written for nationality schools like schools with Hungarian language of instruction in Transcarpathia. Also, teachers found fault with the fact that no supplementary materials were available—no workbooks, audio cassettes, or teacher's books. They considered that the texts and the activities the books contained were 'quite boring' for their learners and did not interest them at all, which fact can very often demotivate the children, rather than inspire them to learn the language.

Furthermore, the Plakhotnyk-books are not useable in Hungarian schools, though they are used, because the language of the instructions in the exercises and the mini dictionary at the back of the books is Ukrainian. Unfortunately, it is a great disadvantage for Hungarian children that they have to learn a foreign language with the help of another one: it is common knowledge that in Transcarpathia, very few Hungarian children in Hungarian schools have a good command of the Ukrainian language (Beregszászi, Csernicskó & Orosz, 2001; Beregszászi, 2004; Csernicskó, 2004).

Further deficiencies of the textbook include:

1. The Ukrainian translation of the words and word combinations are always given when new vocabulary items are introduced in a unit. This limits the possibilities of the teacher

using this textbook to teach the new vocabulary in a more active and productive way, although it does not mean that the teachers follow the instructions of the textbook word by word. At least, classroom observations of English lessons in the schools of the participants of the present research showed the opposite, i.e. teachers applied the book. However, when it came to vocabulary teaching, they preferred methods like miming and using gestures, etc.

2. The vocabulary learning and revising strategy suggested in the book ('Cover one column and say the phrases in the target language or the mother tongue') is far from being effective, especially for Hungarian children, who generally do not understand Ukrainian well. It is not only the language knowledge that is a problem, but the task and the strategy itself do not correspond to modern language teaching requirements.
3. At every recognized professional forum nowadays in Ukraine it is emphasized that one of the most important elements of a foreign language lesson in modern Ukraine should be the developing of the learners' four basic language skills: speaking, writing, listening, and reading (Fábián, 2002; Kontra, 2002; Davydov, 2003; Dyakonovych, 2003; Kolesnikov, 2003; Fábián & Hires, 2004; Onyshchuk, 2005). From the analysis above it is clear that the book focuses mainly on learners' reading, translating, writing, and monologic speaking skills, whereas listening skills are totally disregarded. This can be considered a major drawback of the book.
4. Some activities are meant to develop learners' speaking skills and expand their vocabulary. However, these do not demand communicative competence from the learners because most of these exercises constitute tasks when the learners have to speak to the teacher and no real communication occurs.
5. Writing a composition is a good task provided the learners know how to do it. Nowhere in the 207 pages of the book is it described how to write a 'composition': no instructions and no models are given. Only hints like 'Use the following plan: name, age, profession, place of work' are given when learners are ordered to write about their parents. This makes the task of the learners more difficult because they not only have to think what to write about, but also how to do it.
6. Although the textbook is full of reading tasks, they do not develop learners' reading skills; for example, no scanning or skimming, or gist reading activities are included. Moreover, these do not help learners in better comprehending the texts they are reading. There are interrogative sentences called comprehension questions given after each text, but answering these questions usually does not demand logical or critical thinking, nor

even comprehension: learners are able to respond to the questions without understanding the whole of the text, because the vocabulary of the questions repeats that of the text word by word, so even if the child does not comprehend the text, he is able to do the task by simply finding the similar words and phrases in the body of the text (see Appendix 3).

7. The activities in The Control Lessons are not appropriate for the purpose of testing learners' knowledge: such types of activities can hardly 'control' or assess anything more than spelling and some vocabulary knowledge, while language skills are ignored. The Control Lessons are the ones at which testing and assessment is done, so it means that the textbook and its writers ignore such an important issue as testing language competence on the whole.
8. Activities for home assignment are marked with the help of the sign *. This is good on the one hand, on the other hand it implies that it is obligatory for the teacher to give the indicated exercises for home work, which deprives the teacher of his independence in teaching.

### 2.4.4 Conclusions about the English Textbook for Form 6

Finally, the purpose of describing the Plakhotnyk-textbook *English for Form 6* in some detail, introducing its structure, and analyzing its contents was to make the process clear of teaching children to read in English in Transcarpathian Hungarian schools and make the reader conscious of the situation teaching reading in English is in in our schools, caused by the use of a textbook which does not correspond to the demands of the modern age.

In conclusion, the Plakhotnyk-books are in no respect appropriate to help the teacher to teach English as a foreign language to teenagers nowadays. It is pleasing that they will have gradually been replaced by the year 2011 (Pokovba, 2005, personal communication)—one book per year—by a different, hopefully more useful and modern, course book.

### 2.4.5 Teacher's Notes

As was mentioned before, no teacher's books are available to the official English language textbooks (Plakhotnyk and Martynova, 1995, 1996, 1997a, 1997b, and Plakhotnyk, Martynova, and Zakharova, 1996) used in EFL teaching in primary and secondary schools of Ukraine. To cover this lack of resource books, two articles (Seamster, 2004, 2005) have recently appeared in a professional journal published in Kyiv, *Foreign Languages in Educational Establishments,* providing guidance for English language primary and secondary

school teachers on the application of these English language textbooks. Both articles were written by the same Peace Corps volunteer, Raleigh Seamster, working as a teacher of English in Ukraine. They present some useful notes for teachers to make use of during lesson preparation. These notes will be presented in detail with the purpose of introducing the differences between the techniques that appear in the textbook and in the teacher's notes.

The title of the first article is *Plakhotnyk: Made communicative* (Seamster, 2004), thus implying that the Plakhotnyk-books do not meet the demands of a modern textbook based on communicative principles. In fact, this is the lesson plan of a forty-five-minute demonstration lesson in Form 9, based on Lesson 48 of Plakhotnyk, Martynova and Zakharova (1996), given by the author in a country school, in a small town in Ukraine. The topic of the lesson is 'Theatre'. The objectives are: 1. using new vocabulary words about the theatre correctly, 2. asking and answering questions about the variety theatre, and 3. discussing going to the variety theatre in a dialogue format. The visual aids used in the lesson are: wallpaper chart with written exercises, variety show ad poster, and wallpaper with a dialogue, situations and examples.

The lesson starts with a warm-up and review activity, which lasts for ten minutes. Here, learners are supposed to review vocabulary concerning the topic 'Theatre' and a grammar point, the sequence of tenses. This is a written exercise, having two parts. In Part 1, learners fill in the gaps by remembering the new vocabulary items from the previous lesson, while in Part 2 learners review the sequence of tenses practised in the previous lesson. The author justifies his choice to write his own exercise for practising the given grammar structure by saying that the exercises in the book only use one type of task: translation.

During the presentation stage lasting 5 minutes, the lesson plan introduces a poster advertisement for the variety theatre. The poster, designed by the author of the article, advertises a variety show in Kyiv. This show has famous and popular Ukrainian and American singers in it, all familiar to the learners. The author's reason for preparing this visual aid was that he wanted the learners to be thinking of a certain concert when answering the questions of exercise 9 on p. 66 of the textbook (Plakhotnyk, Martynova and Zakharova, 1996). However, most learners in the school Seamster is teaching at do not have an opportunity to attend big variety shows very often, so the teacher cannot be sure that all the learners will have seen the same shows. Because the teacher should have some control over the learners' answers, it was necessary to design the poster. The author admits that there is an example of a concert in the textbook, but that does not seem so modern. This was another

reason why there was a need to prepare the poster which would make the topic more interesting for the learners.

The practice stage lasts for ten minutes. The learners' task is to answer questions about a variety show from the book (see exercise 9, pp. 66-67). They will look at the poster and answer oral questions about the advertisement there. The activity is expected to practise listening and reading skills.

The following ten minutes is the application stage. The task during this period comprises writing dialogues in pairs about the concert advertised on the poster. It is a requirement that the learners write at least six questions and answers. The teacher provides the beginning of the dialogue which learners have to finish.

In the evaluation stage, the learners have to perform their dialogues. The teacher will evaluate them by such criteria as: Did they have six questions and six answers? (3 points), Did they have the correct information? (3 points), Did they use the questions from exercise 9 as a guide? (3 points), Were their verb tenses correct? (3 points). This way, the maximum mark the teacher can give a child is 12, the highest mark in the Ukrainian twelve-point scale of evaluation of learners' knowledge and achievement.

In the last five minutes of the forty-five minute lesson the teacher explains the home assignment to the learners. The teacher first asks the learners some pre-writing questions, like "Have you ever been to a concert in Kyiv or another big city? Are there any concerts or variety shows in your town? Has there been a variety show recently? Did you go? Will there be another one soon?" After these questions, the teacher asks the learners to do exercise 13, p. 67 for homework, which instructs them to "Write about your trip to a concert. Use the questions of exercise 9 as a guide."

In sum, the author's purpose in presenting this lesson plan was to show practising teachers how the Plakhotnyk-books can be made more communicative and provide them with useful hints how to make lessons more interesting and motivating for the learners by creating real situations when the learners have something to say as opposed to realistic situations when the learners have to say something (Poór, 2006).

The second article under consideration (Seamster, 2005) deals with methodological issues about developing learners' reading skills. The article presents crucial task types in three different sections: pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading.

In the introduction to the first section, pre-reading, it is stated that this is the stage of the reading process when teachers are supposed to prepare learners to read a text. Teacher's questions like 'What do you already know about …? What do you think you will learn

about…? What more would you like to know about …? are much appreciated and advised in this stage. The suggested activities in the pre-reading stage are *prediction*—learners predict what the text will be about from the title, *pictures*—learners look at the pictures related to the text and answer questions about what they see, *vocabulary*—teachers should define any new vocabulary items that they think learners should know before they begin to read, and *ordering events in the text*—the teacher gives the learners a list of events of the text, out of order; learners must order them correctly; some events may not be in the text at all.

The second stage in the reading process is the while-reading stage, when the learners "read and work with the text and new vocabulary" (Seamster, 2005, p. 38). Numerous examples are offered in three categories—working with the text, answering questions, and working with vocabulary—how a text can be processed. These include such tasks as scanning, skimming, answering multiple choice questions, filling in a chart, true or false statements, etc. (c.f. Scrivener, 1994; Bárdos, 2000; Nikolayeva & Solovya, 2002).

In the post-reading part, activities are introduced for the learners to complete after working with the text and vocabulary. The author suggests that these activities should explore such questions as "Did you enjoy the text? What is your reaction to the text? What can we learn from the text? How is the text connected to our lives?" (Seamster, 2005, p. 40). During the post-reading stage, the following activities are useful: *discussion, dramatization*, i.e. asking learners to write a short play dramatizing the story, *perspective writing*, i.e. learners re-write the story from a different character's point-of-view or change tense forms of verbs, *quotations*, i.e. the teacher writes different 'quotations' from different characters of the text and learners decide who said what, etc.

To conclude, all the enumerated activities are easy to apply in the lessons, although some of them need extra preparation on the teachers' part. But this is worth doing because one can achieve excellent results by them. Moreover, the traditional routine of reading aloud and translating the text can be altered into an interesting, challenging, and motivating experience in the English language lessons. Also, the notes provided by Seamster (2004, 2005) can be considered successful in attempting to bridge the gaps between the grammar-translation method of the textbook and the demands of modern language pedagogy emphasizing the importance of learners' communicative competence. However, the absence of a comprehensive teacher's book to the Plakhotnyk-textbooks is an urgent problem which cannot be solved with the help of some notes for teachers, even if their usefulness is clear.

# Chapter 3 Literature Review

## 3.1 Reading Definitions

Nobody denies that reading is a language skill. However, various definitions of reading exist, emphasizing this or that aspect of one and the same skill. Cs. Czachesz (2005) points out that the interpretation and thus the definition of reading has been influenced by several perspectives for the past forty years. She mentions that the type of interpretation has always depended on the current trends in reading research. For example, the behaviourist perspective of reading acknowledges it as a skill in which visual signs or letters are coded into auditive signs or sounds and the reading skill itself is the correctness of coding (Cs. Czachesz, 2005).

In pedagogy, as Cs. Czachesz (2005) states, reading was looked at from the linguistic, psycho-linguistic, socio-linguistic, cognitive psychological, and the constructivist perspectives. More recently, starting from the end of the 1990s, reading has been explained through the perspective of the 'engaged reader'. Besides the cognitive and social viewpoints, this perspective also emphasizes the affective one. It considers reading as an individual activity in which encouraging and motivating on the part of the readers' fellows plays an important role (Reynolds, Sinatra, & Jetton, 1996).

A widely accepted definition of reading constituting the basis of the top-down reading model is that provided by Goodman (1970), saying that "reading is a psycholinguistic process by which a reader—the language user—reconstructs, as best as he can, a message which has been encoded by a writer as a graphic display" (p. 103). This definition implies that there is an essential interaction between language and thought, because "the writer encodes thought as language and the reader decodes language to thought" (Goodman, 1988, p. 12). Goodman (1979) also defines reading as a 'psycholinguistic guessing game', a term well-known in the reading research literature. Silberstein (1987) also approaches reading from a psycholinguistic perspective and views it as "a complex information-processing skill" (p. 30). She characterises the reader as an active, planning, decision-making individual, by whom many skills are applied in order to facilitate comprehension.

A current view on reading looks on it as an interactive, socio-cognitive process (Bernhardt, 1991; Ediger, 2001), covering three aspects: a reader, a text, and a social context in which the process is taking place. This comprehensive definition of reading that current literacy research supports includes identifying and pronouncing words and getting their meaning, as well as bringing meaning to a text to get meaning from it (Allington & Cunningham, 1996; Foertsch, 1998). This interpretation is also reflected in Williams' (1999) view on foreign language (FL) reading, stating that various factors interact with each other in

it, for example, the reader's background knowledge about the topic of the text, his familiarity with the script form, knowledge of the given FL, transference from first language (L1) reading skills, motivation and attitudes to reading, etc. This interpretation is in line with the definition of reading provided by Knuth and Jones (1991), emphasizing that the research base of reading lies in cognitive sciences and it is aimed at constructing meaning. Different mental activities—called reading strategies—are applied by the reader to construct meaning from print (Singhal, 1998). The reader is considered to be an active person, a good strategy user, a 'cognitive apprentice', to use Knuth and Jones' term. This opinion about the reader is similar to the one formulated by Silberstein (1987), referred to previously.

Bloome (1985) discusses the social aspect of reading by describing three dimensions of reading as a social process. He points out that reading involves a social context, as indicated by Ediger (2001), and believes that it is a cultural activity and at the same time, a socio-cognitive process. Street (1995) emphasizes that the social aspect of reading deals with issues of readers' identity, power, and differentiation of responsibilities and rights. The RAND Reading Study Group's report (2002) on reading comprehension also outlines that reading involves three elements, "the reader who is doing the comprehending, the text that is to be comprehended and the activity in which comprehension is embedded" (p. 11), which occur within the same socio-cultural context of the reader's classroom, home, and neighbourhood (Coiro, 2003). This view supports the one held by Reynolds, Sinatra, and Jetton (1996), referred to above. All these elements help a reader process and interpret information obtained from print and construct his own personal meaning of the text he has read (Kontra, 2006).

### 3.2 Reading Models

Numerous publications appeared attempting to explain reading in terms of models, depicting the process how this skill functions in humans (c.f. Bárdos, 2000; Chapman, 1987; Goodman, 1970, 1988; Panova, 1989; Samuels & Kamil, 1988; Singer, 1976; Sztanáné Babits, 2001; Wallace, 1992; etc.).

Two of the most often referred to models are the bottom-up and the top-down reading models. The reader using the bottom-up model of reading decodes the printed message—letters, morphemes, words, and phrases—and builds up the meaning of the text based on these components (Bárdos, 2000). Another model giving a characteristic to this approach was published by Panova (1989). In her simplistic model, which is based on Berman (1970), reading starts with the written text (Block A). In the second phase, speech movement takes

place: she equals this to the perception of language signs (Block B), and finally, sense of the text is arrived at (Block C) (c.f. Figure 1).

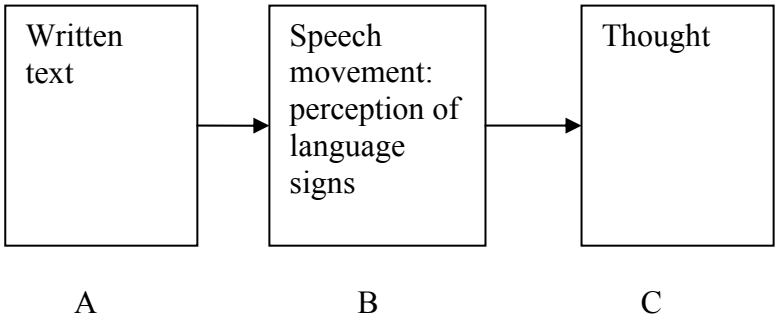


Figure 1. Panova's (1989) reading model

The top-down model (Goodman, 1970) operates in the other direction—the reader forms hypotheses about the meaning of the text being read and tries to verify—find proof for—his assumptions in the form of language characteristics—e.g. phonological, morphological, syntactic, and semantic. If these features coincide with the reader's supposition, they are stored in his memory. If not, then the reader has to start the process again until such correspondence is reached. From this derives that the reader using Goodman's (1966) top-down model of reading for comprehending printed messages applies three different decoding systems: 1) the graphophonic, 2) the syntactic, and 3) the semantic cuing systems (Singer, 1976). These mechanisms are used simultaneously and interdependently, each supporting the other (Goodman, 1993).

The graphophonic system refers to the perception of printed cues such as letters, words, punctuation marks, and the use of knowledge about sound-spelling patterns. Syntactic cues are the ones that signal syntactic patterns. Concepts and information provided by the message to be decoded make up the semantic system. These three systems work for the reader to help him reconstruct the meaning encoded in a message by its writer.

The bottom-up and top-down reading models have deficiencies in that they cannot 'feed back', i.e. no passage back from a higher level to a lower level of processing is possible (Alderson, 2000a; Garner, 1992; Sztanáné Babits, 2001). Therefore, another influential model of reading was devised, that of Rumelhart (1977). It has several components—syntactical, semantic, orthographic, and lexical knowledge—which influence the so-called pattern synthesizer and from the grapheme input through these influences the reader gets the most probable interpretation of the text, i.e. meaning. In this interactive model, the sources interact with each other, and moving up or down to higher or lower levels of processing information is possible. Grabe (1991) believes that in an interactive model the processing of the text is

parallel, in contrast with bottom-up or top-down models where the processing is thought to be serial or 'sequential' (Urquhart & Weir, 1998).

After Rumelhart's model, Stanovich (1980) suggested a somewhat similar interactive reading model, which integrates concepts from a variety of sources. He called his model 'interactive-compensatory', referring to the fact that one strong knowledge source in the reader can compensate for another source being temporarily weak. For example, if a beginning reader cannot understand a word in a text but he knows much about its topic, this background knowledge can compensate for not having sufficient lexical knowledge, and ultimately arrive at the desired meaning. On the other hand, for a skilled reader possessing good word recognition skills but having little or no information about the topic of the text being read, recognizing the words on the page might be more simple and relying on bottom-up processes easier. So, as Stanovich claims, "the compensatory assumption states that the deficit in any knowledge results in a heavier reliance on other knowledge sources, regardless of their level in the processing hierarchy" (p. 63).

Researchers see the advantage of interactive models in their ability to allow for interaction among language sources, as well as allowing for backward direction in processing information from print—from higher level processing to lower level processing, if there is a need for it. This ability is also seen as the disadvantage of the bottom-up and the top-down models of reading.

Finally, reading can also be described by a model having four essential levels (Bárdos, 2000, based on Wallace, 1992): 1. letter recognition, 2. decoding or recognition of word meaning, 3. comprehension, 4. interpretation of text. The structure of this model is hierarchical resulting in the interpretation of meaning, although it focuses on all the levels equally, giving no stronger emphasis to any of them.

There is no clear evidence as to which of the models of the reading process is more effective or accurate, but in the English lessons in Transcarpathian Hungarian schools the bottom-up approach to the reading process is given preference.

### 3.3 Oral Reading

In a recent account of reading, Alderson (2000a, p. 13) claims that "reading involves perceiving the written form of language either visually or kinaesthetically—using Braille", i.e. the final goal of readers is comprehension. This ultimate aim can be achieved either through silent reading or reading aloud. The dissertation research focuses on oral reading or reading aloud. These two terms are used interchangeably in the thesis. There have always been

supporters and opponents of this type of reading. In what follows, a critical discussion of oral reading is presented, considering the major pros and cons of reading aloud.

Reading aloud is mentioned in the academic literature by some of the researchers as an assessment technique by which reading is tested (Fordham, Holland & Millican, 1995; Alderson, 2000a), while others attach importance to it in a different way. Panova (1989) says that reading a text aloud is important for maintaining and perfecting the pronouncing skills of the learners. Panova's view supports that of Klychnikova (1972), according to whom by means of oral reading it is possible to master the sound system of a foreign language and it strengthens the phonetic ability to re-code signals at the letter level, as well as at the level of word, sentence and text. She considers that at the elementary stage of language learning, reading aloud is an important means in developing a phonic reading technique, while at the advanced level it mainly plays the role of expressive reading. This is also emphasised by Kontra (2006), who says that "although reading is normally done silently, teachers often find that most students enjoy reading out literary texts. Reading aloud can increase the impact of a text, can dramatise action and can reveal points, e.g. humour, that might otherwise remain hidden" (p. 92).

Advocates of oral reading support its use in the classroom, saying that "it is one way in which students can be systematically trained to recognise new words and articulate them correctly" (Kailani, 1998, p. 285). This is also reinforced by Medgyes (1997), in that when dealing with a dialogue in English lessons, he likes his learners to read it out loud. He believes that reading aloud does not only improve the learners' pronunciation in the foreign language, but it also helps teachers to see whether the learners understood the meaning of the words, the sentences, and the discourse. It helps overcome psychological barriers and fear of starting to speak in a foreign language (Stronin, 1986).

In addition, Jenkinson (1978, pp. 205-206) believes that "oral interpretation should develop the following abilities: to recognize and pronounce words accurately; to use the voice meaningfully and pleasingly; to read in thought units; to be accurate in reading, not to omit or substitute or reverse or repeat words", etc. Jenkinson underlines that once word recognition skills are mastered by learners, they have to turn to silent reading, as this is the type of reading that "allows the individual to read independently at his own rate" (p. 205).

In contrast, Dwyer (1983) has objections to the teaching of oral reading. She considers that:

* it reinforces the idea that reading and pronunciation are related, thereby strengthening the tendency to subvocalise when reading silently;

* it slows down reading by forcing the student to focus on each word;
* when reading aloud, a student may lose all sense of the meaning of what he is reading, a fact that defeats the very purpose of reading;
* when students mispronounce and misread some words, the teacher interrupts the reading to correct miscues, thereby further impeding the flow of meaning extraction.

Helgesen and Gakuin (1993) also list several disadvantages of oral reading, some of them resembling certain drawbacks pointed out by Dwyer (1983). Among these, the authors highlight the fact that oral reading is slower than silent reading, and they also stress readers' incapability to focus on meaning construction when reading aloud. Helgesen and Gakuin declare that the benefit of oral reading to language learners is questionable. They emphasize that oral reading following the traditional mechanism in the foreign language classroom—i.e. one learner is reading a printed text out loud while the others are supposed to listen—does not lead to language learning success at all, and "simple mumbl[ing] along in a sing-song drone" (p. 261) cannot result in learning. However, one should bear in mind when interpreting Helgesen and Gakuin's claims that the authors do not refer to any empirical evidence while calling attention to learner's oral reading as a teaching technique.

However, Helgesen and Gakuin (1993) admit that activities involving reading aloud are still very popular in many English as a FL classrooms around the world; therefore, they propose various tasks to be used in such classrooms. They suggest that at the beginning level oral reading should be employed in the classroom as it helps in acquiring proper spelling – sound correspondence.

In sum, the use of oral reading has claimed advantages as well as disadvantages. There is a debate over its relevance in the English language classroom. There has no consensus been reached yet, but oral reading continues to be applied in Transcarpathia, and also, learners continue to make miscues when reading orally.

For the purposes of this research, based on the academic literature the construct of reading aloud is defined as the process during which the learner utters a printed text out loud in the English language lesson. The text pronounced by the learner is a printed passage in the learner's textbook and is unknown to him or her. This operational definition implies that reading an assignment written by the child at home or an exercise written by the child in the lesson is not relevant to the present research.

### 3.4 Miscues and Miscue Analysis

In the 1960s and 1970s a plethora of investigations was carried out in reading research, and one of the main research instruments was the so-called 'miscue analysis' introduced by Goodman (1969). Originally, this tool investigated reading miscues made by learners when reading aloud in their L1. Bloome and Dail (1997) acknowledge that it "created a new lens for viewing reader errors by eschewing the correct-incorrect paradigm" (p. 611).

Readers cannot avoid making errors when reading orally. These errors occurring in the process of loud reading cannot be considered errors at all because, as Goodman and Goodman (1978) indicate, the term 'error' has a negative connotation in education. Therefore, they prefer to use the term 'miscue' suggesting that the response to the written text uttered by the reader is not necessarily erroneous. Rather, it can show how the reader processes information obtained via visual input.

Miscue analysis as a research tool (Goodman, 1980) was used widely to garner insight into readers' reading processes both in their native language (Barrera, 1980; Beebe, 1980; Martens, 1997, etc.) and their second or foreign language (Mott, 1980; Rigg, 1988; Rha, 2002, etc.).

Miscue analysis is a diagnostic procedure that identifies students' reading strengths and difficulties. This research tool aims at providing the researcher or the teacher with useful insights into how the reader reads and processes information so that he could be given help in developing more effective cognitive and linguistic strategies when confronting with texts (Bloome & Dail, 1997). Upon analysis of readers' miscues, instruction can be planned or modified. One of the main findings that miscue analysis has provided about reading in a FL is that all readers attempt to extract meaning from the text they are reading, and while doing this, readers apply three cueing or decoding systems, the graphophonic, the syntactic, and the semantic ones. Goodman and Gollasch (1980) give an account of different miscue types and their relevance to the understanding of learners' reading processes. For example, they claim that omitting a word by the reader is a normal part of meaning reconstruction. If omissions are done non-deliberately, they can show the reader's strengths in constructing meaning from text.

Some reviews (e.g. Leu, 1982; Allington, 1984) have pointed out the inadequacies of miscue analysis, e.g. problems of unreliability which arise from the vague definitions of categories of miscues, an absence of theoretical justification for these categories and a failure to disregard the impact of text difficulty on reading performance (Hempenstall, 1998). Besides text difficulty, further factors influencing the type of miscues produced by readers are

listed by Wiederholt and Bryant (1987) among which one can find the following: the reading instruction the learners have received, age of learners, the stated purpose of the reading task, etc. In addition, Freebody and Austin (1992) mention further criticisms. They consider that children's wrong predictions may be a normal part of reading, and may be wrongly analysed as miscues. Alderson (2000a) adds that the analysis is time-consuming, and subjective, and the interpretations of miscues are speculative and uninformative. Also, it seems to be limited to assessing early readers and to focus on word level information, which in itself is inadequate to understanding the reading process. He sees another disadvantage of the technique in that the analysis works with oral reading during which the readers read for the sake of performance and not for the sake of comprehension. He believes that "silent reading is likely to result in a quite different process" (p. 341).

Despite these inadequacies and the warnings of some researchers against its use, miscue analysis continues to be a reading assessment technique in the education community mainly in English-speaking countries with native learners, although in some revised forms such as Retrospective Miscue Analysis (Goodman, Watson, & Burke, 1987; Goodman, 1996; Theurer, 2002), Modified Miscue Analysis (2000), or Running Record Assessment Tips (2002).

## 3.5 The Goodman Taxonomy of Reading Miscues: Criticism

This subsection of the dissertation aims to briefly introduce the Goodman Taxonomy of Reading Miscues and discuss some of its values and deficiencies. A more detailed description of the taxonomy can be found in Appendix 4 of this thesis. The objective of this description is to familiarise the reader with the system of miscues originally set up by Kenneth Goodman in 1967, and then further developed by Goodman and Burke (1973) for application in reading research investigating the reasons why native English children depart from the written text when they read aloud in their L1. This system of reading miscues was also the basis of analysis of the study detailed in this thesis.

The taxonomy provides criteria for selecting the reading material, gives suggestions about administration and procedures of a miscue study, hints on preparing initial and official worksheet copies, and shows the marking system used in miscue analysis.

The taxonomy presents eighteen categories of miscues: correction, dialect, graphic and phonemic proximity, allologs, syntactic acceptability, semantic acceptability, transformation, syntactic and semantic change, intonation, submorphemic level, bound and combined morpheme level, word and free morpheme level, phrase level, clause level, grammatical category and surface structure of the OR, and the OR in visual periphery. All of the categories contain an example or two to show the miscues of certain types.

However, the taxonomy has several deficiencies. First of all, each of the eighteen categories contains subgroups which make the analysis more complicated for the researcher. On the one hand, it is good that the taxonomy is detailed allowing for deeper analysis of certain miscues, on the other hand, the analysis requires great attention and systematic examination on the researcher's part. The whole procedure of applying the taxonomy in research is time-consuming which very often leads only to minor results and compared to the amount of time and effort invested in the whole procedure it will not bring benefit for the researcher.

Occasionally, the authors' (Goodman & Burke, 1973) explanations and rationales for a miscue are subjective or unsophisticated. For example, Category 2 of the taxonomy is named Dialect. This refers to miscues involving "a vocabulary item or a structure which is a distinguishable part of the speech system of an identifiable group of speakers" (p. 22). Subgroup 5 of this category states that a foreign language influence is involved in the miscue. The authors claim that when a native English reader reads the word *chair* as *shair* he commits a dialect miscue under the influence of French. However, this effect is not evident at all. If the researcher asks the reader if he knows other languages besides English and the answer is positive, this cannot and will not prove the direct impact of that other language, so the validity of this part of the category is questionable.

Also, Category 6 makes the researcher's task more complex when coding the miscues because it contains four subgroups such as miscues that result in a syntactic structure which is fully unacceptable; miscues resulting in structures syntactically acceptable only with the prior or following portions of the sentences; or the observed structure can only be accepted within the sentence. The taxonomy does not clearly justify this exhaustive sub-grouping. It is not explained why there is a need to distinguish all these distinctions and how they contribute to better understanding the nature and quality of miscues.

Category 11 of the taxonomy represents intonation miscues. However, it only focuses on different intonation patterns and does not consider readers' miscues in stress patterns as if native children read all the words–even the unfamiliar ones–with correct stress.

The readers are asked to retell what they read to see how they understood the meaning of the text. The researcher should possess an outline of the text and check the reader's retelling against the items of this outline. Goodman and Burke (1973) suggest that one hundred points be distributed across the items within each of the categories of the outline—character recall, character development, theme, plot, and events (see Appendix 4). The biggest problem is with the distribution of the one hundred points across the items because it is not explained adequately how to divide this score among the items. For example, according to the authors fifteen points can be given for character recall—listing all the characters of a story when retelling—but what to do in a situation when there are four or seven characters in a story is not specified. The case is the same with the other categories of the outline.

To sum up, the Goodman Taxonomy of Reading Miscues in its original form has many drawbacks that researchers intending to apply it have to reconsider with care. Recognising this, several authors attempted to revise the taxonomy and make it simpler and more user-friendly, applicable not only by reading researchers but also reading instructors to map the skills of their learners (e.g. Modified Miscue Analysis, 2000; Running Record Assessment Tips, 2002). A kind of modified analysis was used in this study, although it should be stressed that most of the problematic issues with the taxonomy emerged as a result of the research I conducted. The Goodman Taxonomy of Reading Miscues could be improved by simplifying the category system, and justifying the subcategories better and more unmistakeably.

### 3.6 Research Applying Miscue Analysis

#### 3.6.1 Native Language Reading

Miscue analysis as a research tool was used widely to garner insight into readers' reading processes both in their native language (Barrera, 1980; Beebe, 1980; Goodman, 1982; Martens, 1997, etc.) and their second or foreign language (Mott, 1980; Rigg, 1988; Romatowski, 1980; Rha, 2002, etc.). First, research using miscue analysis for diagnosing learners' reading processes in their first language will be reviewed. Then, investigations on second or foreign language will be synthesized to prepare the ground and context for this dissertation research.

The findings of five studies carried out with native English readers reading in English, and two investigations with the participation of Spanish native speakers reading in Spanish are introduced here. These reviews were selected for description because they represent the

past and the present of miscue analysis research, as though they constituted the two ends of a time continuum. The studies will be presented here in chronological order.

One of the first miscue investigations was conducted by Goodman (1982), the initiator of miscue analysis, in 1965. It was a descriptive linguistic study of learners' oral reading. Altogether 100 children in Grades 1, 2 and 3 attending the same American school were surveyed individually. In the first phase, children read word lists based on stories, then they were requested to read the stories aloud. Finally, the children were asked to retell the plot of the stories they read, about which task they were not told beforehand. The main aim of this research was to focus on the way learners read lists of individual words in isolation and in context. The original hypothesis of the researcher was that learners would be able to recognise a number of words in stories which they had missed in lists. He assumed that the reason for such behaviour would be that children only had cues within printed words when reading word lists, whereas during reading stories they had some additional cues in the flow of language. Goodman came to the conclusion that his subjects found it more difficult to recognise separate words in word lists than reading the same words in stories. This led him to the implication that it is not necessary or even desirable to present new words out of their context before native learners read stories, and that concentration on words in reading instruction should be given up. Instead, a theory of reading and methodology focusing on language should be developed. Anyway, concentration on separate words was not abandoned because new testing techniques appeared focusing on reading separate words. The Boder-test of reading-spelling patterns (Boder & Jarrico, 1982) was one of them used for diagnostic purposes to reveal reading disability in learners (Alderson, 2003).

Southgate, Arnold and Johnson (1981) investigated the way children utilised cues and cueing systems when reading aloud. Their subjects were 127 Grade 1 and 2 (7 to 9 years old) learners from ten schools. Before the oral reading session, children were asked to read ten of the most difficult words in the reading passage, presented to them separately on flashcards. The deviations from the original story were marked on the transcript of the text and were coded as non-responses, hesitations, repetitions, self-corrections, substitutions, insertions, omissions, and reversals. Later, all the miscues of the subjects were analysed. Southgate, Arnold and Johnson concluded that reading strategies developed with age, i.e. younger children rely more on the grapho-phonemic and syntactic levels of language using visual or matching methods more often, whereas older children apply semantic or contextual clues more frequently. Also, they found that only 49 % of their subjects were more successful in reading words in context than in a word list. They acknowledge that their finding does not

fully support Goodman's results in 1965 (Goodman, 1982). The authors provide implications for teachers about oral reading—concerning the procedure to carry out diagnostic miscue analysis in the classroom, and silent reading saying that "silent reading should be encouraged at an earlier stage than at present" (Southgate, Arnold, & Johnson, 1981, p. 289), suggesting that oral reading is over-emphasised and silent reading is not paid enough attention to.

Beebe (1980) examined different types of substitution miscues and their influence on reading. The researcher formulated four hypotheses, namely, 1) not all types of substitutions detract from comprehension equally, 2) the more substitutions are self-corrected, the better the reader understands a passage, 3) the more miscues the reader leaves uncorrected that are acceptable, the better the reader understands the text, 4) "covariation in reading comprehension and retelling scores would be accountable to the same set of predictors" (p. 327). The findings supported the hypotheses in that those who self-corrected or who produced the highest percentage of acceptable miscues also had the highest scores on reading comprehension and retelling. In contrast, learners making unacceptable miscues or those failing to correct them scored lowest. The results also support Hypothesis 4, that covariation in reading comprehension and retelling scores stems from the same predictor.

Two studies were conducted with native Spanish speakers reading in Spanish, providing evidence for using miscue analysis research in examining reading in a language other than English (Barrera, 1980; Hudelson, 1980).

The main objective of Barrera's (1980) research was to observe native Spanish-speaking children gain understanding of how they utilise strategies to process information obtained from reading. She singled out nine miscue groups based on the Goodman Taxonomy of Reading Miscues (Goodman & Burke, 1973): graphic similarity, phonemic similarity, syntactic acceptability, semantic acceptability, semantic change, correction, intonation, dialect, and grammatical function. The participants were fourteen native Spanish- speaking Mexican American pupils in Grade 3. In this study, a new miscue measure appeared called Miscues Per Hundred Words (MPHW). Barrera underlined that comparing the grammatical categories of ERs and ORs within the sentence they occurred in proved that the learners were highly competent in syntax, which meant that a noun or a verb was substituted by a noun or a verb in most cases. The main conclusion she drew was that Spanish-speaking children were not different from their English-speaking peers when reading in their own native language. Apparently, they utilised all the three cueing systems—graphophonic, syntactic, and semantic—simultaneously as they read.

Another study analysing native Spanish-speaking Mexican American children was done by Hudelson (1980). Her subjects were Grade 2 and 3 children. In accordance with Barrera (1980), Hudelson concluded that Spanish children reading in their mother tongue were able to use graphic cues and construct meaning by using predicting strategies. Her final conclusion was that even in case of phonetically regular languages with high degree of sound-spelling correspondence—like the Spanish language, "the reader uses graphophonic cues but is not limited to them" (p. 20).

Two more recent reports were prepared by Martens (1997) and Theurer (2002), using a revised form of miscue analysis in case studies.

Martens (1997) looked at the reading miscues of a seven-year-old child with the aim of exploring the relationship between the word recognition view of reading and repeated reading. Her subject, Matthew, was considered an average reader both by his teacher and his parents. Miscue analysis was utilized. Martens coded the miscues made by the child as self-corrections, substitutions, reversals, insertions, omissions, and intonation shifts that alter the syntax or meaning of the text. Miscues were recorded when Matthew was doing repeated readings in three successive sessions, working on two portions—A and B—of the same text. The general findings confirmed what Goodman (1969) stated: readers miscue when reading—they substitute, insert, omit letters, words, or even phrases, etc. These miscues are clear evidence that the reader is searching for meaning. They continue doing this activity until they find that their prediction about meaning makes sense. Martens found that the most important contribution of her research was that miscue analysis can make it possible for teachers and researchers "to help readers value both reading and themselves as readers" (p. 608).

In contrast, Theurer's (2002) subject was a pre-service teacher strongly believing in a text reproduction model of reading. The researcher made use of the retrospective miscue analysis procedure during her research, in which she asked her participant first to tape-record her own oral reading behaviour, then listen to her miscues and consider the reasons for their occurrence. This was done during one-to-one discussion sessions with the researcher. These sessions were based on five questions that the subject was expected to answer about a miscue she had made—e.g. Does the miscue make sense? Why do you think you made the miscue? Did the miscue affect your understanding of the text? What does this tell you about what readers do as they construct meaning from the text?, etc. Relying on her answers to these questions and with the help of the retrospective miscue analysis, this pre-service teacher reconceptualized her understanding of the reading process: from the viewpoint of reading

being word for word she developed her new understanding by realizing that it is meaning that makes the essence of reading.

### 3.6.2 Foreign / Second Language Reading

As was indicated above, many investigations were made about language learners of varying ages when reading aloud in a second or a foreign language. In the 1970s and at the beginning of the 1980s, several researchers were interested in the usability of miscue analysis on non-native speakers reading in English (Cziko, 1980; Mott, 1980; Romatowski, 1980; Tatlonghari, 1984; etc.). Below a brief summary of such research follows, describing the main aims and the most crucial outcomes of miscue research on non-native English learners reading in English.

Rigg (1988) reports about the Miscue–ESL Project, a long-scale, in-depth study of ESL reading by children of four language groups—Arabic, Navajo, Samoan, and Spanish. Children in Grades 2, 4, and 6 were examined in terms of their oral reading performance. The forty-eight subjects of Rigg's investigation were asked to read two stories on two different days. The learners' oral reading and retelling of the two texts were recorded, and analysed using the Goodman Taxonomy of Reading Miscues (Goodman & Burke, 1973). Rigg found proof for some of her original questions, claiming that ESL readers cannot read in English with comprehension without extended competence in English. She states that ESL reading proficiency is not determined by one's first language, and that, to some extent, some aspects of the reading process are universal, i.e. common to all languages.

Rigg (1988) suggested implications for both research and teaching reading. She enumerated several ways to explore, among which she mentioned checking if universals exist in languages other than English. In addition, she called attention to studying the reading behaviour of bilingual learners, and establishing the relationships between first and second language reading.

Concerning the implications of the Miscue-ESL Project, Rigg (1988) offered that the teacher should not interrupt their learners when they commit an error because this will prevent learners from developing into competent and fluent readers. Rather, the teachers should prompt the learners by all possible methods that the aim of reading is the comprehension of the text, and not rendering print into sounds very precisely.

Another implication is that reading teachers can use 'retelling' as a technique for measuring comprehension. This is a good way to train learners for understanding the text they

have read, because when learners know they must do an activity after reading, i.e. they have a goal to achieve, learners will be more attentive to the content of the text.

One of the most crucial suggestions that Rigg (1988) made is that it is possible for the reading instructor to use oral reading as a window on the reading process. By asking and answering questions like 'Do the learner's miscues make sense in this story?', or 'Does the learner self-correct?', teachers can get a clearer picture of their learners' reading strategies.

A comparative study of native German speakers reading in German and English was reported by Mott (1980). Her aim was to examine native German speakers' second language proficiency through miscue analysis. Mott examined two sets of data – miscues in English and in German by seven German students aged between 18 and 20. To describe the recorded miscues qualitatively, she used two types of measurement: MPHW and comprehending scores. To determine the first measure, all the semantically acceptable miscues—or the ones corrected to become semantically acceptable—should be subtracted from the readers' total MPHW. The figure thus obtained showed the number of 'low quality' miscues, which caused loss of meaning. On the other hand, the comprehending score indicated 'high quality' miscues which help readers gain meaning of the text. So the comprehending score refers to the reader's ability to touch patterns from which meaning can be elicited. The study's outcomes were some interesting findings. The average MPHW percentages showed that the subjects made about twice as many miscues in their second language—English—as in their first language—German. Furthermore, the average residual MPHW percentages certified that three times as many 'low quality' miscues were made in English as in German. 54.5 % was reported as an average comprehending score in German and 39.7 % was the same score for English. Finally, Mott defined the average retelling scores, which was 85.1 % for German and 70.4 % for English. It was surprising how the native German speakers on the whole could understand and retell the passages read in English with such a high average percentage of low quality miscues and such a low average percentage of high quality miscues. The answer to this was provided through examination of the types of miscues the subjects made. These departures from the printed message showed that readers could easily compensate for any lack by using the three cueing systems and thus attempt to extract meaning from the text. One of the most important implications was that foreign language reading proficiency is related to native language reading proficiency to a great extent, therefore teachers of second or foreign language reading should be fully aware of their pupils' native language reading proficiency. Also, because the primary objective of reading is comprehension, teachers should help

develop two fundamental language subsystems—syntax and semantics—with the help of which readers can understand the deep structure—meaning—of surface structure forms.

An other often cited study is that of Romatowski (1980), which investigated Polish and English oral reading from a psycholinguistic perspective. This study was based on Goodman's (1968) assumptions that readers use three cueing systems simultaneously when reading. These systems—graphophonic, syntactic, and semantic—make it possible for the reader to be active when reading, and scan, predict, test, confirm, and finally, reconstruct the message the author encoded in the printed text.

The participants of Romatowski's (1980) research were fifth-grade native Polish learners enrolled in a school with English as the medium of instruction. The investigator concluded that having the least number of miscues does not mean full understanding of meaning of a text. On the contrary, it testifies that such a reader looks on the reading process as simple decoding of printed signs into sounds. Wardhaugh (1969) calls this behaviour 'barking at print' (cited in Romatowski, 1980, p. 26). Romatowski, like Mott (1980), finishes her article by emphasising that reading is a more complex activity than uttering every printed letter accurately, and the cueing systems in arriving at meaning are of utmost importance and great help.

Another study that used miscue analysis was the investigation made by Cziko (1980). He worked with two groups of readers: 47 English-speaking seventh-graders made up the experimental group, while 29 French-speaking students were asked to be the native-speaker controls in the study. Cziko adapted the scoring system used by Hood (1975/1976), with the help of which he marked reading errors such as meaningful and nonsense substitutions, word order change, repetition of word or phrase of the text, insertion or deletion of a word or group of words, etc. The scoring was done by judges pre-trained in the use of the scoring system. Cziko's findings suggest that advanced level learners and native speakers of a second language seem to rely on contextual clues, whereas less competent learners—at the intermediate level of language competence—tend to use graphic clues rather than contextual ones. This indicates that learners competent enough in a foreign language apply an interactive strategy of meaning construction, while less competent language learners use a bottom-up strategy relying more on graphic information when constructing the meaning of a text. This result is very similar to what Southgate, Arnold and Johnson (1981) found when investigating native English speakers reading in their first language.

Chronologically, the next study is that of Tatlonghari (1984). This is a qualitative description of the oral reading behaviour of twenty fourth-grade second language learners in

the Philippines. The study used the miscue taxonomy developed by Goodman (1969). Although Tatlonghari treated the data quantitatively, he also described the subjects' reading behaviour qualitatively. The research findings proved that though the subjects had limited background in English, they seemed to read and use the three cueing systems in the same way as their native counterparts in Goodman's study (1969). He states that although his subjects tended to rely on graphophonic cues—this was also true for Cziko, 1980—they were not bound by them.

The last study to be introduced in this review is a case study carried out by Rha (2002), with the objective of garnering insight into the reading process and literacy proficiency of a third-grade ESL learner from Korea. He described reading miscue analysis as "useful to classroom teachers in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of students' reading, and building an instructional model for them" (p. 2). In his research, Rha uses miscue analysis as an assessment strategy, which helps him as a teacher and researcher offer some guidelines the students can follow in developing into proficient readers.

The subject's reading was tape-recorded, and her reading miscues were coded with the help of a scoring sheet based on Goodman, Watson, and Burke (1987). Rha (2002) used the traditional miscue analysis with the oral reading and retelling elements. In addition, the researcher asked the subject some specific questions about the story she had read, like 'Who were the main characters? How many characters participated in the story? What is the story about? etc. In the long run, Kelly showed adequate ability to give a summary of the story, mention its characters, and give its setting, in which she was helped by the researcher's questions. In conclusion, Rha (2002) stated that his subject was successful in overcoming all the obstacles she met in learning to read in English and she could demonstrate her achievements in developing reading proficiency by proving her comprehension of the story she had read.

To sum up this section on miscues and miscue analysis, it can be seen that reading miscues as departures from the printed text that learners read orally, constituted one of the main concerns of reading research from the middle of the 1960s till the end of the 1980s. Miscue analysis as a research tool was used to investigate oral reading miscues of learners reading in their native language, as well as learners reading in a foreign language. This technique was not widely used in the 1990s, but then revisited at the beginning of the 2000s as a method for assessing learners' reading proficiency or comprehension.

### 3.6.3 Contribution of Miscue Analysis to the Understanding of Reading

As a result of research applying miscue analysis, it has been proved that when readers read a text they attempt to construct its meaning by using three cuing or decoding systems which help readers understand the text they are reading. Less proficient learners rely more on graphophonic and syntactic cues, while older learners tend to extract meaning from a text by relying more on semantic cues. This was proved both by researchers investigating learners reading in their L1 (Southgate, Arnold & Johnson, 1981), and investigators examining learners reading in their FL/L2 (Cziko, 1980). There is a similarity in this respect between L1 and L2 or FL reading.

Learners miscue when they read aloud. These miscues can be of low quality—when the meaning of the text is completely lost and they do not help comprehension, and of high quality—which help readers gain the meaning of the text they are reading. When learners make miscues they either substitute words, or insert, or repeat them, or they reverse letters, words, or phrases. According to Martens (1997), such cases clearly testify that readers are searching for meaning.

Research has indicated that the more substitution miscues the readers self-correct, the better they understand the text. Also, when learners have a high percentage of miscues which are acceptable, i.e. syntactically and/or semantically they fit the context, the learners comprehend better. Research on non-native readers has also revealed that ESL readers cannot read and comprehend English texts unless they are competent in this language. Finally, readers who are competent in a FL, approach the meaning of a text through an interactive model of reading, while less competent learners use the bottom-up approach to reading and meaning construction.

What remains to be learned about learners' reading miscues when reading aloud is the kind of relationship between reading aloud and reading miscues, and learners' comprehension. How learners' reading miscues are dealt with in the English classroom is also a question to investigate. The research detailed in this dissertation aims to investigate these issues and thus contribute to the general understanding of reading.

### 3.7 Responding to Miscues

When a miscue occurs during the learner's reading a text out loud, the teacher feels the pressure to react to it and correct it immediately after it has been uttered by the child, even if it was a miscue and not an error. One of the research questions of this thesis inquires about the ways teachers actually react, or respond, to learner miscues, with the purpose of garnering insight into the methodology of teaching reading. Therefore, in this section of the literature

review various possibilities are introduced how teachers could respond to learners' reading miscues.

One of Dwyer's (1983) objections to teaching oral reading is that teachers usually interrupt learners' reading aloud when they mispronounce or misread a word or use improper intonation. This interruption leads to learners' reading slower and their inability to catch meaning from the passage which is being read. This kind of teachers' behaviour is only one way of responding to learners' miscues.

There are different ways how teachers can react to miscues when learners read aloud. Rigg (1988) believes that unnecessary interruption of children's reading in order to correct them will do them no service. This view is supported by Strang (1978), who thinks that "if a pupil is intent on getting the meaning, to call attention to errors is annoying and unnecessary" (p. 71).

Glynn (1980) suggests considering the pause-prompt-praise continuum. The three p's mean that teachers should first wait before mediating in a child's reading and provide time for the child to ponder over his or her own reading, then give some prompt in case this is required, and at last praise the child for the efforts he or she has made. Unfortunately, my preliminary classroom observations in spring, 2002 proved that teachers usually do not take into account the continuum offered by Glynn (Huszti, 2002).

In Campbell's view (1995), there are "five main strategies that teachers adopt" (p. 120) when reacting to learners' miscues. These are:

1. the strategies of non-response;
2. a word-cueing strategy, "which involves the teacher in reading the part of the sentence that leads up to the miscued word and to do so with a rising intonation which draws the child back into the interaction as the reader" (p. 121);
3. using a non-punitive 'no' as a means of informing the reader that a miscue has been produced;
4. providing the word for the reader;
5. use of response that draws attention to the letters and associated sounds in words (Campbell, 1983).

Campbell (1995) warns teachers to respond to learners' miscues with care, because as "the teacher will want to keep the child involved with the book as an active reader, to provide responses which create minimal disruption to the reading, and to help the reader not only with he immediate reading but also to use responses which help the child to develop strategies for the future" (p. 122).

## Chapter 4 Hypotheses and Research Questions

The reasons for carrying out the research forecast and projected the research hypotheses, covering such broad research areas as learners' reading miscues, learners' comprehension of the text they have read out loud, and teachers' response to reading miscues made by learners. These hypotheses emerged based on the literature and my previous four-year experience as an English teacher in a Transcarpathian Hungarian secondary school.

Hypothesis 1: English teachers have learners read aloud in English because they believe this type of reading helps learners improve their pronunciation in English.

Hypothesis 2: Teachers interrupt learners' reading aloud when a miscue occurs and correct it immediately.

Hypothesis 3: Most often, learners make substitution miscues when reading orally.

Hypothesis 4: When reading aloud, learners cannot concentrate on meaning construction adequately; therefore, they understand little of what they have read.

Hypothesis 5: Learners rely on translation rather than the three cuing systems when they try to understand a written text.

Hypothesis 6: Learners feel reading aloud is imposed on them and they do not like this activity at all.

The following research questions have been formulated based on the goals of the study and the hypotheses it attempted to check. They all focus on the issues that turned out to be unanswered during literature search (see Section 3.6.3).

Research Question One: Why do teachers use learner reading aloud in the classroom? What benefits do they expect from it?

Research Question Two: What miscues do twelve-year-old Transcarpathian Hungarian learners of English make when reading aloud in the target language and what are the possible reasons for them?

Research Question Three: How much do learners understand from what they have read out loud?

Research Question Four: How are learners' reading miscues treated by teachers? What strategies do teachers apply in responding to these miscues?

The answers to the above research questions are discussed in relation to the research findings in Chapter 7 where a brief summary is also presented about whether the hypotheses that led the study were proven or refuted.

# Chapter 5 Research Design

## 5.1 Participants

### 5.1.1 Learners

44 Form 6 learners aged 12 and 13 were selected from a pool of 133 for the main study of the present thesis, based on the results of an English proficiency test. The learners' personal data are summarized in Table 6. Although all the learners studied in Form 6 during the study, they were of age 12—38 learners, out of whom there were 30 girls and 8 boys—and age 13—6 learners, out of whom there were 5 girls and 1 boy. It can easily happen that learners of different age study together in one form, because only those learners are admitted to Form 1 of the lower-primary or starting school who have become six years old by September 1*; those who were born after this day 'lose' one year and can start school when they are almost 7. The learners' marks in English reading varied from 7 to 11 (see Section 2.3). Most learners had 9s (11 subjects), i.e. according to the Criteria (2001) referred to above, the learners understood literary texts and were able to retell them, and 10s (16 subjects), i.e. the learners understood texts, even if they did not belong to the sphere of the learners' competence.

| **MARK →** | | | **7** | **8** | **9** | **10** | **11** | **TOTAL** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **AGE** | **12** | **MALE** | 5 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | **8** |
| | | **FEMALE** | 2 | 5 | 9 | 11 | 3 | **30** |
| | **13** | **MALE** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | **1** |
| | | **FEMALE** | 0 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 0 | **5** |
| **TOTAL** | | | **7** | **7** | **11** | **16** | **3** | **44** |

**TABLE 6 Summary of personal details of learners interviewed (age, gender, and mark in English reading)**

All the learners except for two in School E had been learning English for two years at the time of recording. The two children for whom the number of years learning English was different started learning English at home with a private tutor, earlier than it was obligatory at the school, on the initiatives of their parents. One of them had been studying English for three years and had mark 9 in English reading; the other one had been studying English for four years and had mark 10 in English reading. Both of them were thirteen years old at the time when the data for the study were recorded.

* This is the day when the school year starts in Ukrainian schools.

### 5.1.2 English Teachers

Seven English teachers participated in the study on learners' reading miscues. In the 2003/2004 academic year they were the English teachers of the learners selected to be the participants of the main study.

Six teachers were young women, their age range was between 24-32, and the number of years of their teaching experience ranged between two up to ten years. There was also a lady aged 60 who was a pensioner still working actively. Her experience was 38 years of English language teaching.

Three teachers had university degrees in English, while four teachers obtained their qualifications and bachelor's degrees from a teacher training college.

### 5.1.3 Educational Managers

The main study was carried out in schools situated in three districts of Transcarpathia, therefore three educational managers (see Sections 2.2) responsible for foreign language teaching in the districts the schools in question can be found in were interviewed.

The personal details of the three interviewees, all of whom were females, are presented in Table 7.

| DATA | Interviewee 1 (Anna) | Interviewee 2 (Barbara) | Interviewee 3 (Clara) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Sex | female | female | Female |
| Age | 35 | 61 | 55 |
| Number of years of teaching experience | 11 | 40 | 33 |

**TABLE 7. Personal data of the educational manager interviewees**

For the sake of preserving the anonymity of their personalities, the interviewees were given pseudonyms: Anna, Barbara, and Clara. Anna was responsible for Schools A, B, C, D, and F, whereas Barbara was the methodology consultant for the English teacher in School G and Clara was expected to help the English teacher in School E.

Excerpts from the interview with Anna, which was conducted in Hungarian, are presented in the thesis in the author's translation. Extracts from the other two interviews, conducted in English on the request of the interviewees, are given in the original.

## 5.2 Instruments

### 5.2.1 Reading Proficiency Testing

#### 5.2.1.1 The Reading Proficiency Test

In order to select participants for the main study of oral reading behaviour and reading miscues, it was decided that a reading proficiency test should be constructed and administered to measure the learners' general proficiency in reading English as a foreign language. The crucial point in this testing was that learners who achieved average results on this test would become the participants of the research. Because proficiency tests are not based upon any language learning syllabus (Alderson, 1996), the test in question had to be designed so that it could measure the learners' general reading ability (Bárdos, 2002).

The 133 learners for whom the test was prepared were aged eleven and twelve in Form 6 of eight different Hungarian schools in Transcarpathia. All these children started learning English at the age of ten, when being in Form 5. Thus, this was their second year of study of English.

In the following, a description of the reading proficiency test prepared specially for the purposes of this study is presented. It is based on the reading and writing test component of two general proficiency tests called *Starters* (2001; 2003) and *Movers* (2001), developed by the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES). The task types and vocabulary items corresponded to the requirements of the National Curriculum for Foreign Languages Forms 5-11 (1998). These UCLES tests could be used as there was very little possibility that the learners would be familiar with them.

The test (see Appendix 5) contained five parts, each starting with a clear example. There were five test items in each part, altogether twenty-five items. The average result would range between nine and seventeen points. A maximum of twenty minutes could be spent on solving the test.

The main skill focus in Part 1 was reading for recognition of vocabulary. There were five statements, each accompanied by a picture. The testee's task was to decide whether the statements described the pictures. There were boxes provided beside each picture to indicate whether the given statements were true or false. This part was Part 1 of the Starters Reading / Writing Test (2003).

Part 2 consisted of a single picture and a set of five statements, some of which were correct for the picture, while others were incorrect. The testee's task was to write 'yes' or 'no' as appropriate in the spaces provided. This part was Part 2 of the Movers Reading / Writing Test (2001). The original section contained six items, but it seemed logical to reduce this

number to five so that all parts could have a standardized number of items. Therefore, the second sentence, which was the most difficult to understand, was deleted.

Part 3 was a test of vocabulary knowledge and basic writing, or spelling, ability. There were five pictures of objects, each accompanied by a set of jumbled letters. The testee's task was to unjumble the letters and write the name of each object on special 'dashes' that indicated the number of letters in the answer. This was the only part of the test where spelling was tested, so words spelled incorrectly were not considered as right answers. This part was taken from the Starters Reading / Writing Test (2001).

Part 4 focused on reading comprehension, as well as basic writing ability. The text was a riddle with some words missing. This was a riddle-cloze with picture prompts, i.e. the missing words were tested as a picture gap fill task. The testees read the text, answered the final question 'What am I?' based on the text and supplied the missing words which were all singular or plural nouns. Incorrect spelling was accepted as this part did not aim at testing the learners' spelling skills. This was Part 4 of the Starters Reading / Writing Test (2003).

Finally, a story was presented in Part 5 through three pictures with five related questions. Testees had to give one-word answers to all the questions. It was important to state that the correct word may be any part of speech listed in the syllabus (noun, verb, adjective, etc.). Minor grammar mistakes and spelling inaccuracies were accepted. This was Part 2 of the Starters Reading / Writing Test (2001).

In summary, the reading proficiency test described above was intended to be used with Form 6 learners of English as a foreign language in order to get a general picture of their 'overall' reading ability in English so that later they could be selected as subjects for the main study of oral reading behaviour and reading miscues.

#### 5.2.1.2 Results of the Reading Proficiency Test

This section presents the results of the reading proficiency test which was administered to 133 Form 6 pupils aged 11-12, in eight different Transcarpathian schools with Hungarian language of instruction, during March and April, 2003. These learners started to learn English as a foreign language in Form 5, thus this was their second year of studying English.

The main purposes for testing were to measure the learners' general reading ability and to select those who reached average scores—in the present case the average score meant learners who reached the mean score or above it—for the main research of this dissertation. It was believed that pupils with average scores should be selected, which would ensure the participation of learners who were not the best, but not the weakest, either. It was

hypothesized that the oral reading performance of such learners during the main study would provide, as Goodman and Burke (1973) claim, a sufficient amount of reading errors in order for the miscue analysis to be conducted.

#### 5.2.1.2.1 Criteria for Selecting the Schools

The eight Transcarpathian Hungarian schools where the reading proficiency test was carried out were selected according to the following criteria:

1) the school should be one situated in the area where the Transcarpathian Hungarians live in a so-called 'block', not isolated like the Hungarians living in the Upper-Tisza area (c.f. Orosz & Csernicsko, 1999);
2) the school should not have a large size of learners, this being defined as between 100-500 learners which is an average learner size for Transcarpathian Hungarian primary and secondary schools (Bagu, 2001).

These two school selection criteria were decided on because they mirror and emphasize the Transcarpathian Hungarian situation most.

Table 8 shows the number of all the Hungarian primary and secondary urban and rural schools in those towns and districts of Transcarpathia where the Hungarian minority lives. It can be seen from the table that the biggest number of Hungarian schools is in Beregszász and Beregszász District (38) where the majority of the Transcarpathian Hungarian minority lives. Therefore, five schools were selected from this area that met the school selection criteria. Five schools were believed to give enough learners for testing. Three other schools were also selected in accordance with the selection criteria discussed above, two rural primary schools—one in the Nagyszőlős District and one in the Munkács District—and one urban secondary school in Nagyszőlős, in order to cover a wide territory of the Hungarian minority in Transcarpathia. These three schools are situated in settlements which can be found on the edge of the south-eastern and north-western parts of the territory inhabited by Transcarpathian Hungarians (Molnár D. & Molnár, 2003) (see the map in Appendix 1).

| **Name of Districts and District Towns** | **Number of Learners in Secondary Schools** | | | | | | | | | | **TOTAL (secondary)** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **1-100** | **101-202** | **201-300** | **301-400** | **401 - 500** | **501 - 600** | **601 - 700** | **701 - 800** | **801 - 900** | **901-1000** | |
| **Ungvár District** | | 3 | 1 | 1 | | 1 | | | | 1 | **7** |
| **Ungvár** | | | | | | | | | | 1 | **1** |
| **Beregszász District** | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 1 | | | | | **10** |
| **Beregszász** | | | 2 | | 1 | | | 1 | | | **4** |
| **Nagyszőlős District** | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 | | | | | | | **7** |
| **Nagyszőlős** | | | | | 1 | | | | | | **1** |
| **Munkács District** | | | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | **2** |
| **Munkács** | 1 | | | | | 1 | | | | | **2** |
| **Rahó District** | 1 | | | | | | | | | | **1** |
| **Rahó** | 1 | | | | | | | | | | **1** |
| **Técső District** | | | 1 | | | | | | | | **1** |
| **Técső** | | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | | **2** |
| **Huszt District** | | | | | 1 | | | | | | **1** |
| **Huszt** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **TOTAL** | **5** | **8** | **7** | **9** | **5** | **3** | | **1** | | **2** | **40** |

| Name of Districts and District Towns | Number of Learners in Primary Schools | | | | | TOTAL (primary) | Total (secondary + primary) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1-100 | 101-200 | 201-300 | 301-400 | 401-500 | | |
| **Ungvár District** | 2 | 7 | 1 | | | **10** | **17** |
| **Ungvár** | | | | | | | **1** |
| **Beregszász District** | 5 | 14 | 1 | | | **20** | **30** |
| **Beregszász** | | 2 | | 2 | | **4** | **8** |
| **Nagyszőlős District** | 1 | 6 | | 2 | | **9** | **16** |
| **Nagyszőlős** | | | | | | | **1** |
| **Munkács District** | | 2 | 2 | 1 | | **5** | **7** |
| **Munkács** | | | | | 1 | **1** | **3** |
| **Rahó District** | | | | | | | **1** |
| **Rahó** | | | | | | | **1** |
| **Técső District** | | | | | | | **1** |
| **Técső** | | | | | | | **2** |
| **Huszt District** | | | | | | | **1** |
| **Huszt** | 1 | | | | | **1** | **1** |
| **TOTAL** | **9** | **31** | **4** | **5** | **1** | **50** | **90** |

**TABLE 8 Parts A & B Number of Hungarian primary and secondary schools in Transcarpathia**[*]

Table 9 summarizes the number and types of schools where the testing was carried out.

[*] The data of learner sizes of various schools were obtained from the database of Transcarpathian Hungarian schools, prepared by the Association of Transcarpathian Hungarian Pedagogues in 2001.

| Types of school | | Number of learners | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 100-200 | 201-300 | 301-400 | 401-500 |
| Rural | Primary | 3 | — | — | — |
| | Secondary | — | — | — | 1 |
| Urban | Primary | — | — | 1 | — |
| | Secondary | — | 1 | — | 2 |

**TABLE 9 Number and types of schools participating in the research**

#### 5.2.1.2.2 The Proficiency Test Findings

The eight schools selected for the purposes of these investigations were coded A to H. The sample in each school represented one class because in most of the Transcarpathian Hungarian schools there are no parallel classes in one year. All the children belonging to that class—in their sixth year of general study—were asked to fill in the test. In the case of School B, there were two parallel classes in the same year, but one of them was taught German as a foreign language. The relatively low number of testees in Schools C and H is due to the fact that on the day of test administration, three pupils were absent in the former school and four learners in the latter one because of illness. Table 10 shows the total number of learners in the eight schools involved, as well as sample size and the ratio of the number of testees to the total number of learners in different schools.

| School | Number of learners | Sample | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| A | 402 | 19 | 4.7 |
| B | 405 | 15 | 3.7 |
| C | 119 | 13 | 10.9 |
| D | 308 | 16 | 5.1 |
| E | 170 | 18 | 10.5 |
| F | 265 | 23 | 8.6 |
| G | 484 | 19 | 3.9 |
| H | 110 | 10 | 9.0 |

**TABLE 10 Total number of learners and sample size in the schools where the test was administered**

After analysing the proficiency test results of the 133 testees, the means and standard deviations for each school and test section were computed and are summarized in Table 11.

The last column in Table 11—*Total*—shows the means and standard deviations of the total results of testees in various schools.

| School | M & SD | Test Sections | | | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Part 1 | Part 2 | Part 3 | Part 4 | Part 5 | |
| **A** | **M** | 3.68 | 3.36 | 2.89 | 1.94 | 1.63 | 13.52 |
| | **SD** | 0.89 | 0.83 | 1.27 | 0.90 | 1.21 | 3.50 |
| **B** | **M** | 4.66 | 4.06 | 4.53 | 3.6 | 3.66 | 20.53 |
| | **SD** | 0.48 | 0.87 | 0.68 | 0.85 | 1.24 | 3.55 |
| **C** | **M** | 4.30 | 2.53 | 4.46 | 4.30 | 4.0 | 19.61 |
| | **SD** | 0.63 | 0.66 | 0.66 | 0.53 | 0.76 | 1.79 |
| **D** | **M** | 3.43 | 2.85 | 3.68 | 2.93 | 2 | 14.93 |
| | **SD** | 0.67 | 1.65 | 1.14 | 1.57 | 1.62 | 5.43 |
| **E** | **M** | 4.83 | 4.38 | 3.22 | 4.66 | 4.72 | 21.83 |
| | **SD** | 0.27 | 0.61 | 0.80 | 0.51 | 0.43 | 1.66 |
| **F** | **M** | 3.91 | 3.82 | 4.30 | 4.17 | 3.04 | 19.26 |
| | **SD** | 0.15 | 0.66 | 0.72 | 0.86 | 1.18 | 2.20 |
| **G** | **M** | 4.63 | 3.57 | 4.10 | 4.36 | 4.05 | 20.73 |
| | **SD** | 0.54 | 0.77 | 0.84 | 0.53 | 0.59 | 2.12 |
| **H** | **M** | 4.60 | 5.0 | 4.80 | 4.70 | 4.50 | 23.6 |
| | **SD** | 0.48 | 0 | 0.32 | 0.54 | 0.70 | 1.36 |
| **Overall M** | | | | | | | **18.98** |
| **Overall SD** | | | | | | | **3.73** |

**TABLE 11 Descriptive statistics (A-H = code of schools, M = mean, SD = standard deviation)**

A standard item analysis was conducted on the data obtained in order to determine:

- the facility values of items (F.V.) — the facility value measures the level of difficulty of an item; it represents the percentage of students answering the item correctly (Alderson, Clapham, & Wall, 1995);
- item discrimination indices (D.I.) — "the discrimination index measures the extent to which the results of an individual item correlate with results from the whole test" (Alderson, Clapham, & Wall, 1995, p. 288).

The two measures that were calculated indicated that the test items were easy to answer. On the one hand, the facility values were rather high—especially for Items 3, 5,13, and 14: between 93% and 98% of the 133 learners who were tested answered these items correctly—

which means that most of these test items were fairly easy for the testees to answer. On the other hand, item discrimination indices were low, especially for Items 3, 4, 5, 6, 11, 13, and 14. For these items the index was below 10%, i.e. they hardly discriminated between stronger and weaker learners. The highest value of the D.I. for the items of the test was .37 (Item 24), i.e. this item discriminated the best between strong and weak learners, although it did not reach the 'desired limit' of .5, which is considered to be an acceptable proportion (Alderson, Clapham, & Wall, 1995). The facility values and the discrimination indices can be found in Table 12.

| **Item** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** | **8** | **9** | **10** | **11** | **12** | **13** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **F.V.** | .57 | .82 | .96 | .87 | .98 | .87 | .72 | .73 | .80 | .53 | .71 | 70 | .93 |
| **D.I.** | .27 | .16 | .03 | .06 | .02 | .09 | .15 | .16 | .16 | .20 | .06 | .24 | .06 |
| **Item** | **14** | **15** | **16** | **17** | **18** | **19** | **20** | **21** | **22** | **23** | **24** | **25** | |
| **F.V.** | .93 | .63 | .87 | .81 | .72 | .70 | .66 | .73 | .73 | .63 | .57 | .68 | |
| **D.I.** | .04 | .21 | .11 | .19 | .18 | .20 | .17 | .22 | .25 | .30 | .37 | .23 | |

**TABLE 12 Facility values and discrimination indices**

All in all, the item analysis procedure showed that the test items were easy enough for the learners to solve. The original objective with these items was to assure a wide range of learners performing well at the test so as to have a sufficient number of participants, which aim was achieved.

### 5.2.1.2.3 Selecting the Subjects for the Main Study

As was decided before, Form 6 learners would be selected on the basis of their reading proficiency according to the achievements on a reading proficiency test. Learners achieving average scores—the overall mean 18.98 (= 19) or above up to 22 points which makes up 88% of achievement—were selected for the main study, altogether 49 learners. The list of the selected pupils is given is Table 13.

| Learners | Test scores | % |
|---|---|---|
| C3 | 22 | 88 |
| D14 | 22 | 88 |
| E5 | 22 | 88 |
| E6 | 22 | 88 |
| E11 | 22 | 88 |
| E13 | 22 | 88 |
| F1 | 22 | 88 |
| F10 | 22 | 88 |
| F12 | 22 | 88 |
| F20 | 22 | 88 |
| G2 | 22 | 88 |
| G10 | 22 | 88 |
| G19 | 22 | 88 |
| B1 | 21 | 84 |
| B9 | 21 | 84 |
| C8 | 21 | 84 |
| C10 | 21 | 84 |
| D4 | 21 | 84 |
| D7 | 21 | 84 |
| E2 | 21 | 84 |
| E4 | 21 | 84 |
| F2 | 21 | 84 |
| F3 | 21 | 84 |
| F4 | 21 | 84 |
| F5 | 21 | 84 |
| F7 | 21 | 84 |
| F14 | 21 | 84 |
| F17 | 21 | 84 |
| G9 | 21 | 84 |
| G13 | 21 | 84 |
| G14 | 21 | 84 |
| A16 | 20 | 80 |
| C4 | 20 | 80 |
| C7 | 20 | 80 |
| C12 | 20 | 80 |
| F8 | 20 | 80 |
| F15 | 20 | 80 |
| F18 | 20 | 80 |
| G5 | 20 | 80 |
| G15 | 20 | 80 |
| B14 | 19 | 76 |
| C5 | 19 | 76 |
| C6 | 19 | 76 |
| D9 | 19 | 76 |
| E1 | 19 | 76 |
| E16 | 19 | 76 |
| F19 | 19 | 76 |
| F22 | 19 | 76 |
| F23 | 19 | 76 |

**TABLE 13 List of learners selected for the main study (B-H = code of schools, 1-23 = code of learners)**

### 5.2.2 Reading Materials for Learners: Text Selection Criteria

For the purposes of the present study, three different texts were selected based on the following criteria adapted from previous research on reading miscues (Goodman & Burke, 1973; Hudelson, 1980; Mott, 1980; Tatlonghari, 1984; Rigg, 1988; Rha, 2002):

1. at least three different texts should be selected representing narratives and dialogues in order to avoid text effect;
2. the text should represent story format materials as children are hypothesized to understand and remember story sequences better than informational format materials (e.g. facts from biology, chemistry, history, or physics, etc.);
3. the selected texts should constitute a semantically complete unit;
4. 200-300 word texts for twelve-year-old non-native children with approximately 5-7% of unknown words—i.e. complicated enough for the reader to produce miscues; besides, this is also a criterion prescribed by the National Curriculum for Foreign Languages (1998);
5. the reading time of one text should not exceed ten minutes so that the task should not exhaust the learners and thus lose their interest in the whole process;
6. the selected texts must be unfamiliar to the participants;

As a teacher and pedagogue, I could not help including a seventh factor as a selection criterion, namely, that the texts should end with a moral which may contribute to achieving the educational objective to educate learners for being good and friendly. (See Sections 5.3.1 and 5.3.1.1. The texts can be found in Appendices 6, 7 and 8.)

### 5.2.3 Interviews

Interviews with learners, English teachers, and educational managers or district methodologists were conducted to garner insight into their views on issues fundamental in answering the research questions of the present study. All the three target populations were asked several questions on similar topics so that the responses could be checked against each other. This way the validity of questions was ensured as one and the same topic was introduced from different angles and viewpoints. Questions included inquiring about why the technique of learner reading aloud is applied in the English language classroom by teachers, how teachers react to reading miscues made by learners, how reading aloud helps learners understand what they read, whether learners learn the teachers' corrections of miscues, etc.

The interview protocols can be found in Appendices 9, 10, and 11. Further details about the interview schedules are presented in Section 5.3.2 describing the piloting procedures of the protocols. Sections 6.1.1, 6.1.2, and 6.1.3 provide the analysis of the interview data.

### 5.2.4 Comprehension Measures

Two comprehension tests were used in the study to determine how much and how well learners understood what they had read aloud in two texts. The first test was retelling when learners were expected to retell the plot of the text they read. They were also encouraged to mention characters, events, and main topics of the texts. This retelling test followed the recommendations by Goodman and Burke (1973). The second measure was a sixteen-item comprehension test—eight questions to each text—asking about characters, places, events, attitudes, etc. The thought units that learners mentioned were checked on piloted text outlines—one for each text (see Appendices 12 and 13). The piloting procedures of the outlines are presented in Section 5.3.3.

The comprehension questions can be found in Appendices 14 and 15. Information about the piloting of these measures are provided in Section 5.3.3, whereas Section 6.5.1 presents the results of learners' retelling and Section 6.5.2 reports about the findings of the comprehension tests.

### 5.2.5 Classroom Observation

Classroom observations were conducted to receive data and thus shed light on the data obtained from the teacher interviews and retrospective learner interviews, respectively. The main aim was to compare and define whether the teachers' practices correspond to a) their views, and b) what they claimed they did in the classroom.

A class observation sheet was applied during the observation sessions (see Appendix 16). The sheet was based on Wajnryb (1992) and Campbell (1995), that was used during an investigation into why teachers apply learners' oral reading during English lessons in Transcarpathian Hungarian schools (Huszti, 2002, 2003a, 2003b). The observation sheet contained different categories the information of which was supposed to lead closer to the answers to the research questions, namely, what the oral reading practice in the English lessons was like—how many learners read aloud for how long, and what the teachers' reactions or responses to these reading miscues were like—what type of miscues were corrected by the teacher and how. For this latter reason, in the columns under the heading 'Ways of teacher responding to learner miscues' it was decided to write S for substitution, I

for insertion, O for omission, R for reversal, C for correction, H for hesitation—when the teacher provides the word for the child—in the appropriate column.

Those parts of the lesson recording were transcribed in which the learners' task was to read a text out loud—either from their textbooks, or from their topical notebooks[*]. Transcription conventions were based on van Lier (1988), Allwright and Bailey (1991), and Nikolov (1999). The idea of using two different font styles for different languages in the lesson came from a PhD seminar held by Jane Sunderland (2001). The transcription system accepted in this thesis is as follows:

*Transcription conventions*

T = teacher

L1, 2, 3, ... = identified learners

L = unidentified learner

LL = several learners speaking simultaneously

LLL = whole class speaking in chorus

} = teacher and learner(s) speaking at the same time

[eit] = brackets indicate phonetic transcription

Jó. (Good.) = parentheses indicate the English translation of the previous Hungarian utterance

((improper intonation pattern used)) = double parentheses indicate comments on classroom event

., .., ..., ..... = pause, three periods approximate one second

? = rising intonation

! = strong emphasis

OK. Tovább. = a period indicates falling intonation

Very nice, we all like it = a comma indicates low-rising intonation

Well, yes Vera Ivanivna = capitals are both used for proper names and to indicate beginnings of sentences

font type = Hungarian utterances

*italics* = English utterances

numbers at the beginning of lines = indicate different turns

X = incomprehensible item, probably one word only

[*] A 'topical notebook' was used in two of the seven schools (both urban), where the learners wrote down conversational topics given by the teacher, e.g. About Myself, My Friend, Our House/Flat, My Town/Village, The Street I Live In, Kyiv — the Capital of Ukraine, Ukraine — Geographical Position, etc. These texts are meant to be learnt by heart by the learners and retold to the teacher for a mark.

XX = incomprehensible item of phrase length

XXX = incomprehensible item beyond phrase length

::: = indicates that the preceding vowel sound is prolonged

As fieldnotes are valuable for indicating the context of the observations (Allwright & Bailey, 1991), and are most useful for noting down what cannot be heard on the audio tape—for example, body language, hand raising, gaze, what is written on the blackboard, etc.—they were also taken, and the most important notes were integrated into the transcripts of the lesson recordings—such as 'raises his hand', and according to the accepted transcription conventions, in the lesson transcript such a phrase appears in double parentheses.

The English teachers were informed about the aim of the investigation in advance. Although mere knowledge of the objectives of the research might have had an impact on the usual behaviour of the teachers, it was fair to notify them about what would be going on in the classroom. The children were also informed about the reason why the observer was in the classroom, though not in a detailed way. They were told by their teacher that they were having a *guest* who was interested in their way of speaking and reading in English, which was perfectly true.

Finally, concerning ethical issues, first and foremost, preserving the anonymity of participants of the research was of utmost importance. This is one of the ways to protect the participants from any "harm", e.g. damage to self-esteem (Allwright, 1992). Therefore, the teachers were also given codes that corresponded to the codes of their schools. This way, it was easier to identify them when analysing the results.

### 5.2.6 Curriculum Analysis

It must be mentioned that there are two National Curricula for Foreign Languages in use at the moment in Transcarpathian Hungarian schools: the one that the teachers participating in the present study used is the one issued by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine in 1998. There is a newer curriculum from 2001 (National Curriculum, 2001), but this one has been prepared for those children who started to learn foreign languages in Form 2 of the lower primary school at the age of seven. Those children who started to learn a foreign language in Form 5 of the upper primary school at the age of 10 still follow the former National Curriculum (1998). In the official Bulletin of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine in the article *About the new National Curriculum for Foreign Languages* (2001, p. 15) the rationale is given for the revision of the curriculum. It is claimed that the growing need in communication and cooperation between foreign countries and Ukraine caused

essential changes in the approach to foreign language teaching in the primary and secondary schools. The changes in Ukrainian society and the achievements in the theory and practice of foreign language teaching forced the Ukrainian school to modernize the content and methods of foreign language teaching. Therefore, a new Curriculum was developed by specialists, which is said to be based on European standards, taking into consideration the recommendations of the Council of Europe—Common European Framework of Reference, 2001—concerning the teaching of foreign languages.

The English teachers of the learners who participated in the main study of miscues followed the older National Curriculum (1998), therefore this one is analysed in detail in this thesis. The aim of this analysis is to throw light on and find answers to the research questions of the study, first and foremost to learn if there are any curricular constraints concerning the use of oral reading in the English language classroom.

### 5.3 Piloting the Instruments

#### 5.3.1 Piloting the Texts

Three texts were selected based on the criteria described in Section 5.2.2. All the texts represented a semantically complete story with a moral at the end in order to achieve the educational objective (Levchuk, 1991; Szabó, 1998; Ryan, 2002). All the three stories were about friendship and the role it played in everyday life. In linguistic terms, they presented different text types: monologic-narrative (Levchuk, 1991 – see Appendix 6 and Szabó, 1998 – see Appendix 8) and dialogic (Ryan, 2002 – see Appendix 7). The edited readers of Levchuk (1991) and Szabó (1998) were meant for learners of English in the upper–primary classes, aged 11-14. The booklet written by Ryan (2002) is an illustrated levelled reader with a word count of 275 words, meant to be used in assessing the learners' reading skills and comprehension. These three sources seemed to be appropriate for the present research.

First, the teachers were shown the three texts and were asked whether there were unknown words for the learners selected for the piloting procedure. In both schools, the teachers answered there were about five unfamiliar words in Text 1 which makes up about 1.8 % of the whole vocabulary of the text), about 8 unfamiliar words in Text 2 (3.9 %), and about 14 unfamiliar words in Text 3 (6.6 %). The English language curriculum allows for 5 to 10 % of unknown vocabulary in a text to be read out loud by the learners in all classes. Besides, the texts were also compared with the curriculum in English for Form 6 in terms of grammar and vocabulary. All the three of them met the requirements.

The piloting of the texts was carried out in two different schools—one urban primary school and one rural secondary school—with altogether six children, two boys and four girls, during October, 2002 and March, 2003. All these six children took part in the testing of proficiency in reading, and achieved the mean score or above it (18-22). Table 14 summarizes the scores achieved by the learners who participated in the piloting on the reading proficiency test. These 'average' learners were selected to pilot the texts because it was assumed that if such learners were able to cope with the task of oral reading in a satisfactory way, then other participants of the main study would be able to do so as well, and the texts could be considered appropriate for the main study.

| **Learner** | **Score achieved at the testing** |
|---|---|
| A3 | 18 |
| A8 | 18 |
| A11 | 18 |
| A15 | 18 |
| A16 | 20 |
| D14 | 22 |

**TABLE 14 The scores of 'piloting' learners on the proficiency reading test**

Following the guidelines concerning the miscue analysis procedure (Goodman & Burke, 1973), the children were first asked to read out the texts one by one; then, after the reading, they were expected to retell the plot of the story in Hungarian; finally, comprehension questions based on the texts were asked from the learners doing the piloting. The sequence of reading aloud, retelling the story and answering comprehension questions turned out to be a useful one, because in this way the comprehension questions did not give prompts to the learners about the plot of the story, thus the learners' retelling was not influenced.

The piloting showed that three texts to read aloud were too much for learners of age 12. The observed behaviour of the learners participating in the piloting showed low level of interest and little enthusiasm after 33 to 45 minutes of inquiry spent on the reading of three texts, retelling their plot in Hungarian, answering questions in Hungarian based on the texts, and a retrospective interview about their experiences with English oral reading. Therefore, having noticed the tendency of the learners to lose interest in the research process, it was decided to cancel one of the three texts (Text 3 — Szabó, 1998), which proved to be the most

difficult one, and caused the most number of problems in oral reading of the learners in terms of reading miscues, as well as comprehension. So many miscues were made by the six learners doing the piloting in 209 words of the text (774), that the text could not serve the purposes of the present study. Besides, the comprehension rate was too low, an average of 24 %.

The two remaining texts were 'The ant and the pigeon' (Levchuk, 1991), further called in this paper as Text 1, and 'Hippo's toothache' (Ryan, 2002), further referred to as Text 2.

#### 5.3.1.1 Types of Miscues Committed by Learners during Piloting

The six learners in the piloting stage produced 321 reading miscues. The 321 miscues fell under eight categories—correction, repetition, omission, insertion, substitution, reversal, hesitating, and pronunciation. Following the methods applied in Rigg (1988), words repeated identically were counted as one miscue. *Correction miscues* were deviations from the printed text—the expected response (ER)—when readers realized the mistake they made and corrected the word or phrase. Two subcategories were singled out: good corrections—miscues were corrected by the reader and that way the observed response (OR) was identical with the ER—and 'wrong corrections', when the miscue was corrected in the wrong way—the ER was not observed. *Repetition miscues* were words or phrases of the text which were repeated by the reader in the same way two or more times. In the present case these were miscues which were repeated but not corrected by the readers. *Omission miscues* were single words or word combinations omitted by the reader during reading aloud. *Insertion miscues* covered words or phrases that were not present in the ER but the reader inserted them when reading aloud. *Substitution miscues* were words substituted for the ER by the reader. *Reversal miscues* represented cases when the letters of the ER word or the words of the ER phrase were reversed by the reader. A separate category was devoted to miscues which showed the reader's *hesitation* when reading aloud. This behaviour of the reader's proved his or her uncertainty when tackling the text. In such cases it is advised that the researcher help the reader and provide the word for him or her. The eighth category in the present taxonomy used in the piloting was represented by *pronunciation miscues*. Two subcategories were separated within this category: miscues concerning word stress, and intonation miscues. In the piloting procedure pronunciation miscues were mainly words with incorrect stress patterns, also, sentences with improper intonation patterns. Tables 15 and 16 below summarize the types and number of miscues in the two texts—Text 1 and Text 2, respectively.

| Categories | Correction | | Repetition (uncorrected) | Omission | In-sertion | Sub-stitution | Re-versal | Hesitation | Pronunciation | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Good | Wrong | | | | | | | Stress | Intonation | |
| Values | 5 | 5 | 23 | 8 | 4 | 68 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 28 | 145 |

**TABLE 15 Miscue types and their number in Text 1**

| Categories | Correction | | Repetition (uncorrected) | Omission | In-sertion | Sub-stitution | Re-versal | Hesitation | Pronunciation | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Good | Wrong | | | | | | | Stress | Intonation | |
| Values | 9 | 3 | 32 | 11 | 1 | 89 | 3 | 2 | 9 | 17 | 176 |

**TABLE 16 Miscue types and their number in Text 2**

The most frequent type of miscue during piloting turned out to be substitution—Text 1 – 68 / 46.8 % and Text 2 – 89 / 50.5 %, almost half of the miscues in the case of the first text, and about half of the miscues in the case of the second text. The category of intonation miscues came second in order of frequency in the case of Text1 (28 / 19.3 %), and the category of uncorrected repetitions came next in the order of frequency in the case of Text 2 (32 / 18.2 %). Intonation miscues were on the third place among the miscue types in Text 2 (17 / 9.7 %), whereas in the case of Text 1 uncorrected repetitions were on the third place (23 / 15.8 %). The least frequent categories for Text 1 were reversal and hesitation (1 / 0.4 %), for Text 2 this category was hesitation (1 / 0.3 %). This result was in part in accordance with what Yetta Goodman (1976) states, namely, that substitution is normally the most frequent type of miscue, followed by omissions and insertions, and, that reversal is in most cases the least common miscue type. In the present piloting process, substitution was the most common category within both texts, while reversal was one of the least frequent categories.

In miscue analysis it is common practice to report on Miscues Per Hundred Words (MPHW) which is the measure of quantity of miscues used in the Goodman Taxonomy (Mott, 1980; Rigg, 1988). The formula for calculating this measure is ND/WC x 100, where ND is the number of deviations from the text, and WC (word count) is the number of words in the text. Table 17 shows descriptive statistics of miscues in the two texts.

| | MPHW | Range of MPHW | Average MPHW |
|---|---|---|---|
| **TEXT 1** | 10.6 | 7-12 (2.5 % - 4.3 %) | 10.0 |
| **TEXT2** | 11.7 | 6-15 (4.1 % - 10.3 %) | 11.3 |

**TABLE 17 Descriptive statistics of miscues**

Finally, it can be concluded that the two texts were totally appropriate for the purposes of this research as they met all the seven text selection criteria enumerated in Section 5.2.2 above: the two texts represented two different text types—narrative and dialogue, both of them were story format materials expressing a semantically complete unit with a clear beginning and ending, the word count of the texts in both cases was between 200 and 300 words with 5-10 % of unknown vocabulary for the learners, the reading time of one text did not exceed ten minutes, both texts were unfamiliar for the children, and as a last condition, both had a moral at the end.

### 5.3.2 Piloting the Interview Protocols

This section aims at describing the piloting procedures of the other research tools used in this study, the protocols of the retrospective learner interview, the teacher interview, and the educational manager interview. The first one was considered retrospective as it was intended to be recorded after the learners' oral reading performance. All the different phases and procedures of trying out the three protocols took place in autumn, 2003. The three parts in this section deal with the piloting procedures of the three interview protocols. Appendices 9, 10, and 11 contain the English translation of the final versions of the interview protocols.

#### 5.3.2.1 Retrospective Learner Interview

The piloting of these interview questions was done by the same children of Form 6, who were asked to pilot the texts to be used for generating data for the miscue analysis. There were six sixth formers in two different schools: one urban primary school and one rural secondary school.

The original protocol contained five questions:

1. Have you found any difficulties while reading the passage?
2. What happened when ……? (based on the researcher's worksheet copy)
3. Do you often read aloud in your English lessons? (How often?)
4. Could you describe the process of reading aloud?
5. What usually happens after that? (E.g. Do you answer comprehension questions? / Do you retell the plot of the text you have read? Do you do written exercises on the text you have read? etc.)

This interview was meant to be recorded after a learner's oral reading performance with the main purpose of investigating the learners' own understanding of the process of reading aloud, and how they perceive the reasons for making miscues.

Most often, learners found problems with the wording of certain questions. The protocol items that did cause difficulties for the learners were Questions 3 and 4. Misunderstanding was the most important problem here. The word ‘often’ in Question 3 proved to be problematic, because four out of the six learners asked what was meant by it exactly. Also, the meaning of Question 4 was not obvious for the learners: two of them declared that they were not able to answer the question, while the four other learners began to depict one certain situation, whereas the question was meant to ask about the process of reading aloud in general.

When giving answers to Question 5, all the five learners mentioned their preference for this type of activity. Since learners found it important to share this information with the researcher, the question about preference for oral reading had its place in the interview protocol. Therefore, a separate question was included in it, namely: Do you like to read aloud in English? Could you explain why?

Two more questions were decided to be asked from the learners about the teacher’s action in case a learner miscue occurred during reading, and whether learners learned from the teacher’s reaction. The objective of these two additional items, that were also present in the teacher interview protocol, was to get reliable first-hand information on this issue from the learners, that later could also be compared to teachers’ answers and the results of the classroom observation sessions. It could be determined then whether there was coincidence between them (see Appendix 9).

#### 5.3.2.2 English Teacher Interview

It was decided to conduct interviews with English teachers of the learners who participated in the study. The intention was to inquire about their perception of and way of thinking about the use of the learners’ reading aloud in the English language classroom.

Originally, the teacher interview protocol contained four—mainly open-ended—questions. Hungarian is the first language of all the interviewees as well as the researcher’s. So, in order to avoid misunderstanding between the researcher and the participants (Seliger & Shohamy, 1990), Hungarian was used during the interviews. The questions in English translation were as follows:

1. Describe the reading instruction Form 6 learners have received in English in Form 5.
2. Describe the strategies you apply in responding to learners’ miscues.

3. Does learner reading out loud represent common practice in your English language classroom in Form 6?
4. What are the local educational authorities' (or those of the Ministry of Education and Science) requirements concerning learner reading aloud in the English language classroom?

The piloting of this protocol was realized in two phases. In the first one, a female English teacher aged 35, having worked in a Hungarian secondary school in Transcarpathia for 13 years, was asked to answer the questions in the protocol and comment on their comprehensibility. She found problems with understanding the wording of some questions. Thus, she was not able to give an answer to the first question, because, as she explained, she did not teach her sixth formers in Form 5 and was not absolutely sure about what kind of reading instruction her learners got the previous year. Also, she could not understand the essence of the third question, and what exactly was meant by the phrase 'common practice'. During the piloting, the subject touched upon areas which originally were not included in the protocol, but could well be expected to yield serious results. These were aspects like focusing on the teacher's purpose for applying learners' reading aloud in the classroom, or how much a learner read in one lesson, and how the teacher chose to call on the learners to read aloud.

During the second phase, an internationally acknowledged expert on foreign language reading was requested to comment on the teacher interview protocol. He suggested that some extra questions be added; for example, whether teachers applied this technique at all, and if yes, how they used it, and with what purpose. The expert also commented on the order of questions in the protocol, emphasising that it should follow a logical sequence starting from the more general one, and proceeding to the more specific questions. Based on the findings of the two phases of piloting the interview protocol, alterations were introduced to the first draft of the schedule (see Appendix 10).

#### 5.3.2.3 Educational Manager Interview

During piloting the interview protocol to be used with educational managers—fellow workers of educational departments of local authorities, usually experienced foreign language teachers, playing the role of language teaching advisers—two teachers of English in a Transcarpathian higher educational establishment were asked to comment on the questions in the interview protocol. Both teachers were women, one aged 48, with 26 years of English language teaching experience, the other one aged 60, with 38 years of experience of teaching English as a foreign language.

The original interview schedule included the following questions:

1. In your view, how important is it that foreign language learners learn to read well in the target language at the beginning stages of their language learning?
2. What do you think is the role of oral reading in the English language lessons?
3. Do you think the use of reading aloud depends on the nationality of the learners, if they are Hungarian, Ukrainian, or Russian?
4. Does the National Curriculum in English prescribe that learners read aloud in the lessons? If yes, are there any criteria for how to do it? (E.g. reading aloud within a certain time limit, etc.)
5. Do the educational departments of the local authorities demand from English teachers working in Hungarian schools, that they have learners read texts out loud in the English lessons?

The aim of these questions was to learn the educational managers' perception of the technique of reading aloud, and also, the official requirements towards the teachers concerning the use of this technique. The idea of including Question 3 in the protocol came from a study using qualitative research methodology, conducted with Hungarian and Ukrainian sixth formers (Huszti, 2001), the results of which suggested that learners' first language might influence their oral reading performance.

The two teachers doing the piloting of the protocol were asked to write up their opinions and comments. After the written summaries with the teachers' recommendations on altering the protocol were obtained, they were compared with each other and the original schedule. These comments were mainly about changing the sequence of the questions, and including two more items which the teachers considered crucial, namely:

a) Based on your own experience, do teachers have learners to read aloud in the English lessons in Hungarian schools of Transcarpathia? What are the advantages or disadvantages of it concerning the learners or the teachers?
b) In your view, what is the role of reading aloud in the process of developing the learners' reading skills?

Based on the results of this piloting, the recommendations were taken into account and the protocol was altered; the final version can be found in Appendix 11.

### 5.3.3 Piloting the Comprehension Questions and Text Outlines

During the text piloting process, the learners were asked both to retell the stories they had read out loud, and answer comprehension questions based on the texts. Both activities were expected to be done in Hungarian, the mother tongue of the learners.

Before the piloting started, three separate outlines—with thought units singled out—were prepared for each text: one by the researcher, and two outlines by two English teachers in a Transcarpathian higher educational establishment, following the guidelines of preparing outlines to texts by Goodman and Burke (1973). The three outlines for both texts were compared and contrasted, and one final version was constructed for the texts (see Appendices 12 and 13). Outline 1 for Text 1 contained 28 idea units, whereas Outline 2 for Text 2 had 41.

The Goodman Taxonomy (Goodman and Burke, 1973) suggests that learners be given 100 points for retelling the plot of the text. This number seemed to be too high for such short texts as in the present study. So, it was decided that one point would be given for each character in the story, and also one point for each idea unit that was identified. Consequently, the maximum attainable score for Text 1 was 31—three characters and 28 idea units—whereas for Text 2 it was 48—seven characters and 41 idea units. Two points were given for mentioning the main themes of the two texts—friendship and helping one's friend—as is implied in the Taxonomy.

When writing the comprehension questions to the texts, several issues had to be considered. First, should the learners' L1 (Hungarian) or L2 (English) be used in the questions? Second, should they be written or oral? In deciding these crucial problems, the suggestions in the Goodman Taxonomy helped greatly. Mother tongue application has an advantage over L2 application in comprehension questions at the beginning stage of foreign language learning, where the target population of the research was at the time of the research. Misunderstanding of the questions could be eliminated in this way. Oral questions were decided on because this is what the taxonomy suggests. Also, the retrospective interviews with the learners who were doing the piloting of the texts and the comprehension questions proved that this was the common way of working on a text read out loud in the lessons of English.

The questions were all open-ended to probe areas omitted in the retelling of the plot of the story read out loud. The Goodman Taxonomy says that these questions must not use any specific information which the learner did not report in the retelling and must not steer the reader to conclusions (Goodman & Burke, 1973). Such simple questions as *What? Where? When? How?* were used which Form 6 learners were likely to be able to answer.

Comprehension questions to Text 2 turned out to be adequate and proper for the purposes of this investigation, while the questions to Text 1 had to be expanded. The piloting procedure showed that to achieve better results, there was need to add two more questions to the ones existing (see Appendices 14 and 15). The italicised words in the questions meant that they had to be pronounced by the researcher in case they had been mentioned before by the learner.

**5.4 Data Collection Procedures**

Data for the study were collected in two major phases. The first one took place in the 2002-2003 school year and involved selecting, designing and piloting the research instruments, as well as administering a proficiency test and selecting the learner participants of the miscue study. The researcher was not present at the proficiency testing sessions, but asked the English teachers to administer the test to the children. There was a time limit of 20-25 minutes for the duration of the test. No dictionaries or vocabulary notebooks were allowed to be used. The written tests were collected and handed over to the researcher by the English teachers themselves.

The second phase was longer, taking a year and a half. Learners' reading miscues, their answers to two comprehension tests and retrospective interviews with them were recorded during the first semester of the 2003-2004 school year. English classrooms were observed at the beginning of the second semester of the same school year, while interviews with English teachers and educational managers were conducted in April and May, 2004. The data were coded or transcribed between June and December, 2004 so that their analysis could start the following year.

Data on the National Curriculum and the English textbook in use were collected in January, 2005 and document analysis was done in the spring of the same year.

Learners' reading aloud was sampled in the traditional way, i.e. the pupils were allowed to look briefly through the texts they were expected to read aloud. Two minutes were provided for each child to glance at each text. This short span of time was believed to be necessary for the learners to familiarize themselves with the unknown texts. Most often, the learners indicated they had finished looking through the texts before the two-minute preparation time was over.

Learners were told to read aloud the texts and then retell as much of the plot as they could. Also, after retelling, some questions were asked about the characters and events of the stories. Each learner's performance–reading aloud the texts, retelling, and answering the questions–was tape-recorded for later analysis. Besides tape-recording the learners, the researcher marked the miscues on a separate worksheet of the texts as suggested by Goodman and Burke (1973) (see Section 3.5 and Appendix 17).

A rater was trained to code the miscues (the same teacher who was asked to code the miscues that were made in the observed lessons; see Section 6.2). Following data collection, the tapes were transcribed and

miscues were coded by the researcher and the rater. No important differences emerged between the two coding lists. The ones that did appear concerned the issue of syntactic or semantic acceptability of a miscue, and whether the miscue caused considerable changes in the meaning of the text. Whenever disagreement occurred, the tapes were replayed and the coding was negotiated until agreement on the miscues was reached.

Two comprehension measures were applied during the research to check the learners' understanding of the main messages of the texts they had read. After reading the texts out loud, the research participants were expected to retell what they understood from the texts. Then they were asked to answer comprehension questions to further measure how well the research subjects understood the texts. Both comprehension test procedures were conducted in Hungarian, the learners' native language. The two investigation tools were piloted as described in Section 5.3.3.

Forty-four learners from seven different Transcarpathian Hungarian schools were interviewed after their reading aloud of two texts had been recorded. The children were asked altogether nine questions–besides their personal details of age, sex and number of years of learning English–about the presence of oral reading in their English classrooms, about the activities they perform after oral reading, about the ways their teachers treat reading miscues in the classroom, etc. Learners were interviewed as the last stage in a research session after reading aloud two texts, retelling the plots and answering comprehension questions. The

interviews lasted ten to fifteen minutes, using the learners' L1. Some of the learners had become really tired by that time and answered the questions unwillingly, while others became lively and gave complete responses to all the questions and claimed they were happy to help and participate in a 'real investigation'.

It was intended that a set of three English lessons in the seven schools where the learner participants of the miscue study came from would be observed. These lessons were all taught by the English teachers of the learners who were later interviewed. This decision was made on practical bases: learners in Form 6 have three English lessons a week. So a series of three lessons during a whole week was observed in each of the seven schools to maintain continuity and see the classroom practices as a process, not separated from each other.

Lessons were not video taped as a camera in the classroom was considered too intrusive, thus it could greatly influence the usual behaviour of learners and teachers (Seliger & Shohamy, 1990). Instead, all the twenty-one lessons—three in each of the seven schools—were recorded with the help of two small audio recorders, one at the front of the classroom and the other at the back. In this way, the two recordings could complement each other: what was missing from one of the recordings might have been present in the other. The observer

sat behind the students, out of their direct view, thus not distracting their attention from the teacher and the task.

Three of the seven teacher interviews were conducted in the staff room of the school the respondents were teaching at, in two cases the place was a vacant classroom in the school, one respondent was interviewed in her home, and one teacher was interviewed in a local café where there was some background music, but which did not disturb the recording of the interview. All the seven interviews went smoothly; they were not interrupted by disturbing factors. Time spent on the interviews ranged between 20 minutes to one hour. All of them were conducted in Hungarian.

Two educational manager interviews were recorded in the office of the subjects, while the third one was done in the home of the participant as the only possible solution for lack of time and place. All the three ladies were willing to participate in the study and were extremely helpful. The interviews lasted from 25 to 46 minutes.

### 5.5. Data Analysis

#### 5.5.1 Different Techniques in Miscue Analysis

For analysing the data—reading miscues made by the participants of the research—during the piloting stage, and later the data of the main study, there was need to create a coding system to be used with the data. The Goodman Taxonomy of Reading Miscues (Goodman & Burke, 1973) served for the basis of this system. The taxonomy distinguishes between two kinds of responses on the part of the reader: the expected response (ER)—the text to be read out loud—and the observed response (OR)—the way the reader reproduced the text. The OR can vary from the ER in five different physical ways: insertion, omission, substitution, reversal, and regression (see Appendix 4).

Since its appearance, the taxonomy has been used in various studies (e.g. Barrera, 1980; Hudelson, 1980; Mott, 1980; Romatowski, 1980; Tatlonghari, 1984; Rigg, 1988; Rha, 2002; etc.). These studies analysed and discussed miscues of non-native English speakers—e.g. Spanish in Barrera, 1980 and Hudelson, 1980; Polish in Romatowski, 1980; German in Mott, 1980; Filipino in Tatlonghari, 1984; Navajo, Samoan, Spanish and Arabic in Rigg, 1988;

Korean in Rha, 2002—therefore they might be of interest in the present study, because the participants of this research were non-native English speakers, too.

There have been attempts to alter the Goodman Taxonomy and the process of miscue analysis the result of which was a diagnostic method called the Modified Miscue Analysis (2000). This procedure was believed to be "valuable for teachers wanting to find out more about students who seem to have trouble gaining meaning from print" (Modified Miscue Analysis, 2000). The technique considers that miscues can be of six types: substitution, insertion, omission, repetition, correction, and reversal. Unlike the original taxonomy of Goodman, it deals with repetition and correction as two different types, whereas in the taxonomy these were united in one type called 'regression' (Goodman & Burke, 1973), used for print that was repeated and either corrected or not. The technique analyses miscues by seeking answers to the following eight questions:

a) To what extent does the OR look like the ER?
b) To what extent does the OR sound like the ER?
c) What is the grammatical function of the OR and the ER?
d) Is the OR grammatically acceptable within the text?
e) Does the OR produce a structure that is acceptable in terms of meaning?
f) To what extent does the miscue change the intended text meaning?
g) Is a different intonation pattern involved?
h) Is the reader's dialect involved in the miscue? (Modified Miscue Analysis, 2000).

All of the above eight questions correspond to the eighteen categories in the Goodman Taxonomy, e.g. questions a) and b) equal to categories 3 and 4—graphic and phonemic proximity, questions d) and e) coincide with categories 6 and 7—syntactic and semantic acceptability, etc. The technique also distinguishes between high quality and low quality miscues. High quality miscues indicate that the reader is reading for meaning, it includes miscues like familiar language, e.g. contractions instead of full forms, dialect, self-correction, and omissions. Low quality miscues show that the reader is insecure in reading and may not be deriving meaning from the text being read. These miscues include omissions, frequent self-corrections, and reversal/omission/addition of letters.

In the past few years, some new systems appeared on the Internet, providing English teachers with valuable pieces of advice on how to create so-called *running records* of a child's reading in English as their native language or English as their second language. These are generally used for assessing a child's ability to read in English. During the process of

assessment, the learner reads aloud a passage from a book that corresponds to their level of interest, cognitive development, and linguistic difficulty—but with which the child was not familiar previously—while the teacher records the learner's reading behaviour, i.e. all the deviations or miscues that occur in the child's reading. It is said that through analysing the results of running records the teacher can gain insights into a child's reading and get information about their particular reading difficulty, and also, ideas about how to best help the child. With the help of running records, the teacher can learn whether the child can use semantic, syntactic, and phonographic cues (or 'graphophonic', as Goodman (1970) puts it). If the learner cannot use these cues properly, the teacher needs to teach some strategies to them in order to be able to derive meaning from the text they have read. These strategies include paired or shared reading followed by discussion about the text's meaning—in case the learner cannot make use of semantic cues in the text, prediction exercises and cloze procedures—in case the learner cannot make use of syntactic cues in the text, using questions that direct the pupil to looking at the text, e.g. 'What does the word begin with?', or 'Can you see any smaller words you recognize?'—in case the learner cannot make use of graphophonic cues in the text. Running records single out seven types of miscues: refusal—when the learner does not read the word or any part of it—indicated by _ _ _ _ _ _ _; self-correction, indicated by the word 'error' written above the miscue and then 'SC' for 'self-corrected'; omission, indicated by a circle drawn round the word which was omitted; insertion, indicated by a caret in the place of insertion above which the inserted word is written by the teacher; hesitation, indicated by the letter 'H' or a slash; reversal, indicated by the letter 'S' on its side; and substitution, indicated by the misread word crossed out and the substituted word written above it.

Based on the different methods and techniques applied in miscue analysis, a new system was developed for the purposes of the present study, which is described in the following section.

### 5.5.2 The Miscue Coding System Used for Coding the Data

Based on the descriptions and explanations in the previous part of this section on different techniques in Miscue Analysis, the following coding system has been adopted for application in the present study (Table 18):

| Name of miscue | Abbreviation | Marking |
|---|---|---|
| Substitution | S | Substitution is written above the line of the text |
| Insertion | I | The sign ^ (caret) is used to signal it; also, the inserted word is written above the caret |
| Omission | O | The omitted item in the text is circled |
| Reversal | R | 'S' on its side (a curved line) |
| Repetition | Rep | The repeated word or phrase is underlined as many times as it is repeated |
| Correction | C | The miscue is written above the word and 'C' is written if the miscue is corrected, or 'UC' if it is not corrected |
| Hesitation | H | 'H' is written in the place the reader began to hesitate |
| Intonation | Int | ↑ or ↓ to indicate rising or falling intonation, put in front of the incorrectly intonated word or phrase |
| Stress | Str | The sign ' put in front of the incorrectly stressed syllable |

**TABLE 18 The miscue coding system applied in the present study**

Marking of the miscues was carried out in the researcher's worksheets of the text the participants read out loud. The abbreviations of miscue names were needed and used during the class observation sessions when the researcher indicated the types of miscues corrected by the teacher.

Substitution meant that the ER was substituted by another word or phrase during the learner's reading out loud. The substituted word was written above the line of the text. Insertion meant that the learner inserted an extra word or phrase during their reading aloud. This inserted word or phrase was indicated in the official researcher's worksheet by a caret, and also, the inserted item(s) was/were written above the caret. Omission was considered to be a case when the reader omitted a word or phrase in the printed text. In the worksheet such

omitted items were circled. Reversal miscues were departures from the printed text when the reader reversed the order of letters in a word or words in a phrase, or phrases in a sentence. Reversals were indicated in the worksheet with the help of a curved line. Repetition miscues were the ones when the child repeated one word, or part of it, or a phrase once or more times. In the researcher's worksheet, repetitions were shown by underlining the repeated word or phrase as many times as it was repeated. Correction meant that the child misread a word—deviation from the print occurred, but the reader noticed this deviation and corrected himself or herself. The miscue was written above the word that was misread and it was marked 'C' (corrected) if the child corrected the miscue and 'UC'—uncorrected—if the child did not correct it.

There were instances when the foreign language learner did not know how to read a word. In such cases, first he usually hesitated not wanting to take the risk of being erroneous. This type of behaviour was believed to be a separate miscue category, marked with the help of the letter 'H' written in the place the reader began hesitating. Again, it often happens that foreign language learners make intonation and word stress miscues. Intonation miscues in this study were indicated by means of two arrows, one for the rising tone (↑) and another one for the falling tone (↓). The different intonation subpatterns, e.g. fall-rise or rise-fall, was not dealt with in this study. A stress sign (') was put in front of the incorrectly stressed syllable in the researcher's worksheet to indicate a stress miscue.

In sum, the description of nine miscue categories in the miscue coding system has been presented in this section. The ways of indicating miscue types has also been explained above.

### 5.5.3 Other Analyses

Data from all the interviews with learners, teachers, and educational managers were analysed qualitatively. The interviews were transcribed and the transcripts were searched for different patterns to emerge.

The audio-recordings of classroom observation sessions were also transcribed and analysed both qualitatively, e.g. different miscue types were identified, and quantitatively, e.g. the frequency of occurrence of miscues was established.

Comprehension test items were examined quantitatively with the help of item discrimination tests and calculating facility values. Learners' reading comprehension test results were also examined quantitatively by working out percentages, and drawing performance scales or orders. Where appropriate, statistical data were calculated and presented in the thesis.

Textbook and curriculum analysis was performed qualitatively by describing the crucial issues in both documents and giving a comprehensive evaluation about them.

# Chapter 6 Research findings

## 6.1 Interviews

### 6.1.1 Retrospective Learner Interviews

All the forty-four learners who took part in the miscue study were interviewed about the way reading occurred in their English classrooms and also, their reading aloud in English—if they liked it, if they could concentrate on meaning, what miscues they made, how their teacher treated these miscues, etc. The interview protocol can be found in Appendix 9.

The first question in the interview protocol asked the learners to reflect on the way they read out the two texts, and if they had any difficulties while reading and comprehending them. Only nine subjects declared they had no problems in reading and understanding the two selected texts. This can be considered true if the learners' results on how many correct answers they were able to give to comprehension questions are taken into account: the percentage of correct answers given by them ranged between 50% and 100%. Thirty-five learners admitted they had difficulties in reading the two selections. Most often they complained about unfamiliar words that they had not heard about. This can be seen in Extract 1[*]:

1) There were some problems, especially in the middle of the texts. Some unfamiliar words. I don't think we have learned them already. I tried to deduce the meanings but this way it is more difficult. (Subject A16)

Other learners complained about the difficult pronunciation of the words. Some children stated they were not able to concentrate on meaning because they were more concerned with the pronunciation of words (see the extracts below).

2) There were some words that I couldn't read. I couldn't really pay attention to the meaning of the two texts because I was mainly focusing on how to pronounce some words. (Subject C3)

3) There were unknown words but I didn't pay much attention to meaning. Rather, I concentrated on how to pronounce the words. This is most important in the lessons, too. More important than meaning. Anyway, we translate everything. (Subject F15)

One learner also informed about a strategy that she applied to deduce meaning; she was definitely using her schemata to arrive at meaning:

[*] The retrospective interviews with the learners were conducted in Hungarian. The extracts are presented here in the author's translation.

4) I feel I understood the essence. Although I don't know what 'vine' means, I could only infer that this must be a kind of string, for pulling one's tooth. At least, this is what my mother used once when she pulled out my brother's tooth. (Subject F10)

The second question of the interview protocol was based on the official worksheets of the two texts filled in by the researcher during recording the oral reading sessions of the learners. This question examined the reasons why certain miscues occurred as perceived by the subjects. The question aimed at the learners' global perception of the reasons for miscues, as time did not permit for discussing the miscues one by one—in certain cases there were as many as 70 miscues made by one subject in both texts together, e.g. Subjects B1 and E11, and obviously, discussing all of them separately would last too long for the learners to maintain interest in the study. Therefore, those miscues were asked to be explained by the learners which were the most frequent in the official worksheets, the assumption being that learners were able to clarify why they committed these usual and frequent miscues. Twenty-three learners—more than half of the whole population—were not able to explain the reasons why they made miscues. They answered 'I don't know' or 'I can't explain'. This might show the lack of their cognitive reasoning skills. Other answers are summarized in Table 19:

| **Answers** | **Number of learners** |
|---|---|
| Could not explain | 23 |
| Gave the reading rule | 5 |
| Anxious, perplexed | 4 |
| Past tense of 'say' - wrong form recorded | 3 |
| Didn't know how to read, so read in Hungarian | 3 |
| Slip of the tongue | 2 |
| Couldn't read it | 1 |
| By chance | 1 |
| Sure she read correctly | 1 |
| Tried to infer meaning on analogy | 1 |
| **TOTAL** | **44** |

**TABLE 19. Reasons for making miscues**

Learners mentioned that they did not even notice they made errors and that was just a slip of the tongue, or the miscue happened by chance, or the readers were just perplexed because of the task and because of the fact that they were recorded with the help of a tape recorder. It excited them.

5) Question 2: Why have you read ‘on the’ instead of ‘one’ (based on the interviewer’s worksheet copy)?

Oh, really? This must have been because I was very excited. (Subject G10)

In five cases, the learners referred to different reading rules that they learned in Form 5 when they learned English literacy (see Appendix 2 on rules for reading stressed vowels in words):

6) Question 2: What happened when you read ‘wat’ instead of ‘what’ (based on the interviewer’s worksheet copy)?

Here letter ‘a’ must be read like that in a closed syllable. For example, ‘bat’ and ‘rat’. (Subject C10)

In the situation described in Extract 6, the learner seemed to be aware of the general rule, but unfortunately the miscue presented an exception from the general rule as the letter ‘a’ stands after the cluster ‘wh’ and should be read as [o].

The following example illustrates the way three learners tackled words they could not pronounce. They wanted to perform their task of reading, so they decided to do it any way, even if it meant reading an English word in Hungarian—it should be borne in mind that in Hungarian, unlike English, sound-letter correspondences are regular:

7) Question 2: What happened when you read ‘was’ as ‘wash’, as if it were a Hungarian word (based on the interviewer’s worksheet copy)?

I wasn’t sure how to read it so I read it as if it were a Hungarian word.[*] (Subject F22)

In three cases in the answers to Question 2, the learners’ reasoning was logical, although incorrect:

8) Question 2: What happened when you read [seid] instead of [sed] in the verb ‘said’ (based on the interviewer’s worksheet copy)?

This is the past tense of ‘say’ plus the ending of past simple. That’s why. (Subject F19)

In the above example, it is evident that the child knows the rule for pronouncing the past simple ending of the English verb. However, it seems that he might have problems with irregular verbs, not knowing that ‘say’ is an irregular verb and as such the formation and pronunciation rules do not apply to it.

[*] In Hungarian, letter ‘s’ is read as the English letter cluster ‘sh’.

The answers given by the forty-four children from seven different schools to Question 3, i.e. if they ever read aloud texts from their textbooks in the English lessons, were unanimous: everybody answered ‘yes’ to this question, which means that in the seven schools in question oral reading was a common exercise in the English lessons.

Questions 4 and 5 of the interview protocol used in this study were closely connected. They asked whether the children liked to read aloud or not and what the reasons were for their likes or dislikes. These questions aimed to explore if the learners enjoyed the activity of reading aloud and if they were encouraged by it to perform better at reading and comprehending different types of texts.

36 learners—81.8% of the target population—stated that they liked to read aloud in English, and only 8 learners (18.2%) admitted they did not prefer this type of activity in the English lessons. Out of the 36 learners who enjoyed reading aloud in English, there were six subjects who liked to read aloud texts familiar to them, and three learners liked to read texts that they considered easy. Six learners were not able to give any reasons. Table 20 sums up the reasons why learners liked or disliked to read aloud in English.

| REASONS FOR | Number of learners | REASONS AGAINST | Number of learners |
|---|---|---|---|
| I understand better what I read | 9 | When I make a mistake, the others laugh at me | 3 |
| I can practise my pronunciation | 8 | When I read silently, a mistake is not a problem | 2 |
| When I read silently, my attention deviates and I confuse things | 5 | I feel I cannot read | 1 |
| I can focus on meaning more and my thoughts don’t deviate | 4 | When I read silently, I do not have to think how words should be pronounced | 1 |
| I can pay more attention to pronunciation and meaning | 3 | I can't read and it's a shame | 1 |
| My mother never liked to read silently | 1 | **TOTAL** | **8** |
| English is interesting | 1 | | |
| It sounds nice | 1 | | |
| It sounds different from Hungarian | 1 | | |
| I am used to it, I read everything aloud in English | 1 | | |
| I can achieve better results in nice and fluent reading | 1 | | |
| I can get good points in pronunciation and reading | 1 | | |
| **TOTAL** | **36** | | |
| **TOTAL** | | | **44** |

**TABLE 20. Reasons for learners’ likes and dislikes towards reading aloud in English**

In the extracts below, views of learners can be found which demonstrate the reasons why they like or dislike reading aloud in English. The learners in Extracts 9 to 12 were in favour of this type of activity in the English lessons, while those in Extracts 13 to 15 were against reading aloud, i.e. they did not enjoy doing it. These learners' marks in English reading were usually below 10, i.e. 'good' and not 'excellent' marks. The questions in all the cases below were the same: Do you like to read aloud in English? Why / why not?

9) Because I can practise my pronunciation this way. If I make a mistake, my teacher corrects me and I learn from this mistake. (Subject B9)

10) When I hear what I read I can pay more attention to its meaning. When I read silently, my attention deviates from the reading process and I can't focus on the meaning of the text. (Subject C4)

11) Once my mother told me that when she was young she always had to read silently in the school but she couldn't, she just mumbled. So now she encourages me not to read silently because she has this bad experience. Therefore, I always read aloud. That's why. (Subject D9)

12) Because reading aloud in English sounds so nice. And my reading is not very bad, although very slow. We sometimes 'read for time'[*] and when this happens, my result is always bad because I read slowly. But I even practise at home a lot so that I could read faster. But I feel the need for pronouncing all the words correctly. Being exact in pronouncing every word of a text is very important for me. (Subject F2)

13) Because when I read silently, to myself, I am sure that nobody hears me and if I make a mistake, this is not a problem. When I read silently I feel I understand the text better. My reading in English is quite poor. (Subject B1)

14) I don't know, but it's better when I read silently to myself and nobody hears it. This way I can better think about the meaning because I don't have to think how separate words should be pronounced. (Subject C12)

15) There are cases when the others laugh at me when I make a mistake. But somebody's reading is even worse than mine. I don't like this. When I am laughed at, I lose my interest in English. The teacher always says they shouldn't laugh but unfortunately there's always somebody who laughs. (Subject F1)

[*] 'Reading for time' means that a learner has to read a definite amount of characters within a time limit. In Form 6, the requirement for an excellent mark (12) is 400 characters a minute (National Curriculum for Foreign Languages, 1998).

It is interesting to note that—as Table 19 proves—three learners mentioned that they did not like to read aloud in the lessons because whenever they miscued the other children laughed at them (see Extracts 13–15 above). This negative experience almost certainly did inhibit them and prevent them from developing and improving their oral reading.

The opinion in Extract 10—the reader's attention deviates from the text when she reads to herself—directly contradicts some viewpoints in the literature (Beech, 1985; Helgesen & Gakuin, 1993; Panova, 1989; Rayner & Pollatsek, 1989; Smith, 1978) in that it emphasises the importance of hearing what one reads. But it should be borne in mind that this is what a twelve-year-old child thought about the reading and decoding process.

Questions 6 to 9 sought information about the so-called macro level of miscues, i.e. the ways oral reading and oral reading miscues appeared in the learners' classroom: what tasks they did, how miscues were treated, and if they believed corrections helped them in developing and improving their reading.

Question 6: What happens after you have read a text or part of a text aloud from the English textbook?

Learners gave various answers to the above question, although they all agreed that translation of the text read out loud was a crucial point of the lesson when oral reading occurred. The different options enumerated by the learners are summed in Table 21.

It is evident from Table 21 that one learner mentioned more than one activity type—provided multiple answers—that they usually do in their English lessons after having read a text from their textbook out loud in English. The table clearly shows that the most common activity in the English lessons done after reading aloud sessions is answering comprehension questions orally in English—38 children mentioned this activity who make up 86.4% of the whole population. These questions were most often the ones that can be found in the learners' textbook (Plakhotnyk & Martynova, 1996), printed after the texts read out loud. Sometimes teachers also put questions to learners based on the texts but they were not common—only six learners mentioned this option. Also, it was characteristic that learners answered comprehension questions given by the teachers or presented in the textbook in a written form —14 learners (31.8%) provided these options. Answering questions in Hungarian, either orally or in a written form, was not typical at all because only two learners stated that they sometimes did it.

| ACTIVITY | Number of learners |
|---|---|
| Translate sentence by sentence orally | 21 |
| Translate paragraph by paragraph orally | 8 |
| Translate 3 or 4 sentences at a time orally | 5 |
| Answer questions of the teacher in English orally | 6 |
| Answer questions of the teacher in Hungarian orally | 1 |
| Answer questions presented in English after the text in the book orally | 32 |
| Answer questions of the teacher in English in written form | 5 |
| Answer questions of the teacher in Hungarian in written form | 1 |
| Answer questions presented in English after the text in the book in written form | 9 |
| Retelling the plot as homework | 1 |
| True or false statements given by the teacher | 4 |
| Matching done in writing | 1 |
| Write the contents in English | 1 |
| Retell the plot in English | 11 |
| Retell the plot in Hungarian | 4 |
| Gap filling exercises prepared by the teacher, in written form | 6 |
| Writing questions to the text and answering them | 2 |
| Discuss the text in Hungarian | 1 |
| Construct sentences based on grammatical structures from the text | 2 |
| Translate the text after the teacher taught new vocabulary and we put it into our vocabulary notebooks | 1 |
| The teacher gives a word from the text to construct a new sentence with | 1 |
| After reading aloud put unknown words into vocabulary notebooks | 1 |
| After translating, reread aloud without translation | 1 |
| Learn parts of the text aloud | 1 |
| Translate and learn the unknown words | 2 |

**TABLE 21 Activities in the English lessons following oral reading sessions**

Translating the texts read aloud was also a usual activity in the lessons. This happened in different forms: through sentence by sentence translation orally—mentioned by 21 learners (47.7%), through paragraph by paragraph translation orally (8 — 18.2%), or translating three or four sentences at a time orally (5 — 11.4%). Four learners referred to translation but did not name in what form they meant it. Retelling the plot of texts was done either in English (11 learners — 25%) or in Hungarian (4 — 9.1%). The distribution of learners who named this

activity was equal through the seven schools, i.e. this task was familiar with the children. Other not too frequent and common activities mentioned by the learners involved doing gap filling exercises, answering true or false statements prepared by the teacher, matching activities in a written form, constructing sentences with grammatical structures from the texts, and others. One learner from School E declared that they learned parts of a text by heart after they had read it aloud.

> 16) We usually answer questions in English that are after the text in the book. Sometimes we retell the plot. And we also learn important parts of the text by heart which I like doing very much. (Subject E4)

This must mean the learner's individual approach to reading as no such activity was observed in the school in question, and Teacher E did not refer to anything like that, either. Also, no other learners from School E reported on this issue, so it can be concluded that this was not a characteristic task type in the school with Form 6 learners in the English lessons.

The most frequent activities stated by the learners are categorized and put into descending order of frequency in Table 22.

| No | ACTIVITY | Number of learners |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Answer questions in English | 52 |
| 2 | Translate the text into Hungarian | 38 |
| 3 | Retell the plot of the text | 15 |
| 4 | Do gap filling exercises | 6 |
| 5 | Answer True or False statements | 4 |
| 6 | Construct sentences | 3 |
| 7 | Write questions based on the text | 2 |
| 8 | Write down the contents of the text | 1 |
| 9 | Discuss the text in Hungarian | 1 |
| 10 | Learn part of a text by heart | 1 |
| 11 | Matching | 1 |
| 12 | Put unknown words into vocabulary notebooks | 1 |

**TABLE 22 Frequency of activities done after oral reading sessions in the English lessons (reported by learners)**

Question 7 asked about the ways teachers treated miscues, i.e. learners' perceived ways and methods of teacher response to learner miscues. The aim of this question was to provide answers to Research Question 4 of the main study of the present dissertation: How are learners' reading miscues treated by teachers? What strategies do teachers apply in responding to these miscues?

In the observation sheet (see Appendix 16) used during classroom observation sessions in this study, five strategies of teachers' treating learner miscues were singled out (see Section 5.2.5). The five various categories based on Campbell (1995) were teachers' non-response—when teachers neglected the miscue; immediate correction—when teachers stopped the reader, indicated the miscue, and corrected the miscued word immediately; delayed correction—when teachers waited till the end of the child's reading and only then indication of the miscue occurred, and then it was corrected; word-cueing—when teachers read the part of the sentence that led up to the miscued word with a rising intonation which was meant to draw the child's attention to the miscue; and providing the word—when the teacher indicated the miscue, waited for two or three seconds, and if the learner could not correct the miscue himself, the teacher provided the word for him.

The children reported only on immediate correction (24 learners — 54.5%) or delayed correction (20 learners — 45.5%) as strategies applied by teachers in responding to learner miscues, although the category of non-response was also observed during the observation sessions. Subjects also told of the actions that happened after the teacher corrected them. These usually involved asking the child who made the miscue to repeat the corrected word properly, or all the children in the classroom had to repeat the word in chorus. Or, the teachers had the learners put down into their vocabulary notebooks the pronunciation of unknown or unfamiliar words. In the following extract, the child describes in detail how the teacher's delayed correction happens in their English classroom:

> 17) She immediately stops the reader, asks him to think about his mistake, waits till the child can correct himself, or if he cannot, then the teacher corrects the child herself. (Subject E13)

Another finding is that before teachers indicated the miscues, sometimes they asked the learners if they noticed the miscue that occurred. This way, as learners believed, the teachers could 'check' if all the learners were attending to the loud reading of a text:

18) She waits till the reading is finished and then asks the others what miscue they have noticed and asks them to correct. This way she checks if we are listening to the text and the reading or not. But we are listening and following the text in our books and if we hear a mistake and know the correct pronunciation then we raise our hands and say it. (Subject G5)

Questions 8 and 9 again were related to each other. They both asked the children about the issue if they remembered the teachers' corrections and did not make similar miscues the following time they were reading aloud. The answers to Question 8—Do you personally learn from the mistakes corrected by the teacher?—can be grouped into two main sets: 'yes' and 'not always'. There were 21 learners (47.7%) who stated they remembered their teacher's corrections, although when asked if they made similar miscues the following time they read aloud in the lessons 29 learners (65.9%) were brave enough to admit they made similar miscues. The responses to Question 9—Does it mean you will not make the same mistake when you read aloud the next time?—revealed that only six learners admitted they did not make similar miscues. Seven learners admitted they did their best not to miscue but most often they did not manage. Two children said they were able to remember the corrections by the teacher but not immediately, and they made mistakes the following time they read aloud. Two or three English lessons had to pass with the same miscues till these two learners remembered and learned the corrections. This is how the children reported about it:

19) Maybe I once again make the same mistake but for the third time I don't. (Subject F4)

20) For the third or the fourth time at most. (Subject F22)

*Summary*

It can be concluded that in all the seven schools where the interviews were conducted reading aloud was a common reading activity in the English lessons, and when a text of any type occurred in the learners' textbook it was always read out loud by the learners.

79.5% of the learners had problems in reading the two selections, most often complaining about unfamiliar words that they had not heard about. A few learners also stated that it was difficult for them to concentrate on meaning because they were more concerned with the pronunciation of words, and could only focus on making efforts to be able to read and pronounce the words correctly. Being exact and correct played an important role for certain learners, mainly in School F.

It is striking that more than 50% of the learners interviewed were not able to give reasons why they miscued certain words. They were even unaware of the miscues they made. The reason for this must have been connected to the young age and cognitive development of the learners. Those who could name the causes of their 'errors' mainly alluded to the miscues being 'a slip of the tongue', or believed miscues occurred because of their being excited, or the learners gave a reading rule they had learned in Form 5. The rule in every case was correct, but its application was erroneous.

A great majority of the learners (81.8%) expressed their liking for reading aloud in English. The most frequently mentioned reasons were that reading aloud was a good opportunity to practise proper pronunciation, and as the subjects admitted, it was easier for them to understand the meaning of a text read out loud, although their retelling and comprehension scores (see Section 6.5) did not seem to prove it. Among the dislikes children mentioned a psychological factor, being mocked by their fellow learners for making miscues, because these cases always meant something negative for them. Also, weaker readers preferred silent reading to reading aloud because then they did not have to force themselves to be extremely attentive not to make miscues, because in silent reading a mistake was no problem as nobody—especially not the teacher— heard it.

The interview data proved that translation of a text of any type and in any form was crucial in the English language classroom in the seven schools where the data were recorded. Translating a text read out loud was a typical task referred to by 38 children, most often it was done orally, sentence by sentence. In School G, the translation was done paragraph by paragraph, or, if a paragraph was too long, then three or four sentences were read by one learner. The most frequent activity in the lessons reported by the learners was answering comprehension questions orally in English, most often printed after texts in the textbook. Retelling the plot of texts was not a general activity in the seven schools, as only 15 (34.1%) learners mentioned this as an option. Other activities included matching, gap filling, sentence construction, etc.

Learners were aware of two types of teacher response to learner miscues, about which they reported in the interviews: immediate correction (24 learners — 54.5%) and delayed correction (20 learners — 45.5%). After correcting the miscues, teachers usually asked the miscuing child to repeat the corrected word properly, or had all the children in the classroom to repeat in chorus.

The general conclusion is that most often children did not remember the teachers' corrections, mainly because the teachers neglected this area in teaching: only 19 subjects

stated their teachers asked them to repeat the corrected miscues, which is less than half of the population. Anyway, even if the teachers asked for repetition it did not necessarily mean that the children would learn and remember the corrected miscues. To achieve this, they needed time and practice, as Subject F22 explained: "I remember them [miscues] for the third or the fourth time at most."

### 6.1.2 Interviews with English Teachers

This part of the thesis describes the results of seven interviews conducted with English teachers in seven different schools. The findings are presented here according to the answers to the questions in the protocol used during the interviews (see Appendix 10).

At the very beginning of the interviews, the construct of reading out loud was explained to the respondents.

Question 1: What are the local educational authorities'—or those of the Ministry of Education and Science—general requirements concerning learners' FL reading in the English classroom? Prompt: what type of reading should be used?

Subject B—the English teacher in School B—answered it was possible that such requirements existed but she did not know anything about them and was not familiar with them. This answer was also given by Subjects C and G. Respondent F claimed that there were such requirements. She said they were clearly defined in the National Curriculum for Foreign Languages (1998). She mentioned that it was necessary for English teachers to have learners read for a certain time limit. According to this requirement, learners of Forms 5, 6, and 7 had to read 400 letters in 60 seconds, while for learners of Forms 8 and 9 this amount was 450 letters and for learners of Forms 10 and 11 this was 500 letters of print. Subject A claimed that the National Curriculum sets requirements concerning the use of both oral and silent reading, but in Forms 5 and 6 it is oral reading that should be practised and it is used by her for the learners to get accustomed to foreign pronunciation, and what the foreign language sounds like. Subject D did not mention any requirements at all, but she expressed her firm views on the importance of learners' reading aloud and translating the text read out loud into Hungarian in order for the learners to understand its meaning. Subject E said she was not familiar with such requirements, but she was quite positive that speed reading was obligatory and that teachers had to evaluate learners' ability to read fast.

Question 2: Are there any curricular requirements on learners' reading aloud in English?

Subject B claimed she did not know about such requirements. Subjects E and G stated the same. Subjects A and D were of this same opinion, while adding that no special

requirements on the part of the local educational authorities were set towards them. Subjects C and F answered that in the lower primary classes (Forms 2-4) and in Forms 5 and 6, reading aloud was obligatory, whereas in Forms 7-9 and the secondary classes silent reading was a requirement. Respondent F also added that she asked her learners to read aloud in all the forms she was teaching at, even in the upper primary ones—Forms 7, 8 and 9—and sometimes in the secondary ones—Forms 10 and 11—as well.

Question 3: Do you apply the technique of learner reading aloud during your English lessons? Why? / Why not? Question 5: What is the purpose of learners' reading aloud in your English lessons?

The responses to these two questions are dealt with together, because both of them asked about very similar things with the aim of ensuring validity of the answers: the purpose of use of reading aloud in the English language classroom. All the teachers agreed that the main aim of oral reading in the classroom was to practise proper English pronunciation. Subject B said if learners saw and heard a text at the same time, they were better able to translate it.

> 21) Also, learners who are afraid of talking are braver to read aloud because they do not have to think over what they are going to speak about. They are reading, so they do not have to construct sentences on their own. On the other hand, learners can hear their own pronunciation mistakes, which is good. When they are reading aloud, they can see and know what they are going to say so they can and do concentrate on the pronunciation of the words, rather than their meaning. (Subject B)

Subject F claimed that by reading aloud, it was possible for learners to properly pronounce English sounds, but also practise appropriate English intonation. This opinion was also supported by Subjects E, C, D, and G. One of them—Teacher E—added that for those of her learners who were shy and anxious to speak, this tension became less when they read aloud. This claim was also supported by Subject A who said that

> 22) I experience that reading aloud always helps inhibited children because they do not have to construct sentences and then pronounce them, but they are producing written texts orally. This way they are not afraid of making mistakes in grammar. (Subject A)

Subject G stated she always experienced that the learners in her classroom were paying attention to the one who was reading during oral reading sessions and were able to indicate the mistakes that occurred. This statement seems to contradict Helgesen and Gakuin's (1993)

view who assert that learners reading aloud might cause serious discipline problems in the classroom because only one child is active during a certain period of time—the one who is reading aloud—while the other learners are inattentive and passive at this time.

Question 4: Does learner reading aloud represent 'common practice' in your English language classroom in Forms 6? Do learners read aloud texts from their English textbook in every English lesson?

The statements of the teachers at this point were diverse. However, they agreed in that all of them used the technique of learner reading aloud in the English lessons. The frequency of application of this technique differed from teacher to teacher. For example, Teacher D stated that she used it in every lesson in Form 6. Subject B answered that it always depended on the material; for example, when she had to teach some grammar structures, there was no oral reading. Subject F claimed that this type of activity was frequent in her lessons, at least once out of three times a week. Subject A's answer was similar to that of Subject F, saying that at least once a week she asked the learners to read aloud. Subjects C and E answered that they usually used this technique for 5 to 10 minutes in general in every lesson. Subject G asserted that this was not a frequent activity type in her lessons, but when there was a new text in the textbook, she always asked her learners to read it aloud.

Question 6: Is it obligatory to have learners 'read aloud for time'?

The answers to this question were quite different. Subject B said that it was obligatory and she sometimes made her learners do speed reading—'read aloud for time'. She believed it motivated the learners, especially the younger ones in Forms 5 and 6, it meant some kind of competition for them, which they liked very much. Subject F was not sure whether it was obligatory, and she never made her learners do it. Subject E declared that she thought it was obligatory, but she did not find it useful at all. She never made her learners do it. Subject C said it was not obligatory and she never did it, while Subject G claimed it was obligatory, but she never did it. Subject A was sure that it was not obligatory, although the textbook (Plakhotnyk & Martynova, 1996) in use does have such tasks (see Section 2.4). She used speed reading only rarely when the class was too noisy and she needed to quiet the children. On the other hand, Subject D was against learners' speed reading, claiming that

> 23) Every child comprehends a text in a different way. They have their own tempo in reading which greatly differs from child to child. One learner is able to read in English more quickly than his peers and it is not fair to compare children on unequal bases. (Subject D)

Question 7: What do you do when you hear a miscue made by a learner? Prompt: neglecting the miscue, correcting the miscue immediately when heard, etc.

Out of the seven teachers, three answered that they did not interrupt the reading of the child, but made notes of the mistakes and when the reading was finished, they enumerated the mistakes, corrected them, and asked everybody in the class to repeat the correct variants. Four teachers, Subjects A, D, E, and F stated that they corrected the mistakes they heard immediately, interrupting the children during their reading, and asked them to repeat the correct variant at once. Subject D evaluated this way of responding to learner miscues as a bad habit of hers which she could not abandon. Subject F declared that she could not help correcting immediately, this was a characteristic feature of hers and she acknowledged it as a 'bad habit of hers'.

Question 8: What types of mistakes do you correct? What do you not correct?

All the teachers claimed that they corrected mainly pronunciation mistakes. Subject A underlined that these were the only mistakes that she corrected. She came across no other miscue types. She believed the reason for this was that

24) All my learners are very attentive when reading aloud. (Subject A)

Subject G said she corrected all types of mistakes, but when asked to clarify them, she mentioned pronunciation and intonation mistakes only. Subject E emphasized one type of miscue she encountered during her learners' reading aloud. This was the omission miscue, mainly omitting very short words like two-letter preposition and the indefinite article 'a/an'. Subject C mentioned that it was always a problem for her learners to use in practice the different reading rules they had learned—reading the vowels in open and closed syllables, Plakhotnyk & Martynova, 1996; see Appendix 2:

25) Interviewer: What do you mean by reading rules?

Subject C: Well, I mean there are the so-called open and closed syllables, that is, syllables ending in vowels and in consonants. In Form 5 we teach about different syllable types and how the stressed vowels should be read or pronounced in them. When during practice activities learners have to categorise separate words according to syllable types, they can do it, but when it comes to reading, even if learners know the rules, it is often difficult for them to apply theory in practice. Learners do not have time to think about the type of syllable while reading. That is why they make pronunciation mistakes.

Question 9: Do you believe that your learners learn from the miscues you have corrected and they will not make the same ‘mistakes’ the following time they read aloud?

All the teachers agreed that it was not common that learners were able to learn the corrected variants of the miscues immediately and not to make them again in the following lesson. They needed a lot of practice for this. On the other hand, Subject D claimed that there were learners in her class who were able to remember things and learn from the corrected miscues, although such learners were rare.

Question 10: Do all the learners read aloud texts from the textbook at one and the same lesson or only certain ones? Question 11: If only certain learners do that, which ones? How do you select them?

Teachers said it depended on the material of the lesson, and on the learner size of the class. For example, Subject F answered that in larger heterogeneous classes with 20 to 24 learners, there was not enough time for everybody to read aloud in a lesson; in such cases, she called out learners randomly, or sometimes she called out those who were ‘keeping quiet’. Most often teachers reported that they called on either those learners who had few marks in reading, or they did it randomly. Subject C also added that when she noticed that somebody was not paying attention to the lesson and was ‘daydreaming’, she called on this child with the purpose of directing their attention back to the lesson. She considered it worked well in her classroom.

Question 12: What, in your understanding, is your learners’ attitude to reading in English—silent and oral—like?

Subjects A and B answered that the younger learners adored reading aloud, they could not read silently. Oral reading was a possibility for them to perform in front of the others. Also, this provided a kind of competition for them. In contrast, older learners, e.g. in Forms 7-9, especially the poorer ones with poorer language knowledge and abilities, did not like reading aloud. They had a lot of inhibitions, and felt anxiety to perform in front of the others. This view was also supported by Subjects C and E, who added that this was because when reading silently, weaker learners did not always understand everything as they could not concentrate their attention on the text, but when reading aloud, they could comprehend everything because after loud reading every sentence in the text was translated. Subject F thought that her learners were in favour of oral reading, because in this way they were able to show their knowledge to the others. Subjects D and G asserted that their learners preferred oral reading to silent reading, and also, that they very rarely asked their pupils to read silently.

Question 13: In your view, how does reading aloud help comprehension of a text?

The answers to this question were sometimes inconsistent and contradictory, indicating a discrepancy between the teachers' perception of the role of reading aloud concerning comprehension and what the academic literature claims about the topic. Subject B considered the relationship of reading aloud and comprehending a text very important; she thought only reading aloud helped in understanding, because learners were using two of their senses—seeing and sounding out—to complete the same task, while during silent reading, she believed, learners could not pay adequate attention to understanding a text, and quite often she found them 'daydreaming' and not completing the task. This is in contrast with what she admitted before, when she was asked Question 3 of the interview protocol: when doing oral reading, the learners were rather paying attention to pronunciation of the words than their meaning (see Excerpt 21 above). Subject D also held the view that oral reading and reading comprehension were directly connected to each other, i.e. learners could understand a text only if they read it aloud because when reading silently, they could not pay attention to comprehension of the plot. Subject F considered that in fact, oral reading did not help learners much in understanding a text. They could only understand it when the text was translated into their mother tongue. Subject E agreed with the opinion of Subject B, but she added that to understand a text properly and completely, her learners also needed to read it silently for themselves:

> 26) I think it helps. If a word is pronounced and learners hear it, this helps them in recognising the word. But to completely understand a text, just reading it out loud is not enough. One needs to read it silently, too, and rethink what the whole text means. In fact, a combination of silent and oral reading leads to comprehension, I would say. (Subject B)

Subject C was not sure if reading aloud helped comprehension of a text at all. She underlined that when reading aloud, learners paid more attention to the proper pronunciation of the words than trying to understand the meaning and essence of a text. Subject G declared that reading aloud alone did not help in understanding a text, and it was rather the full translation of it that helped. This view was also expressed by Subject A who stated that reading aloud did not help comprehension. She said her only purpose of asking learners to read aloud was to check their pronunciation. When she wanted her learners to understand a text, she always translated it for them, or asked the learners to do the translation.

*Summary*

Having analysed the answers given by seven teachers to thirteen questions during the interviews, it can be assumed that most of these teachers were not totally familiar with the requirements of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, concerning the teaching of English as a foreign language reading in primary and secondary schools. Only three teachers seemed really competent in this question, they were even able to refer to two official documents that they were using during their work. Oral reading was obligatory to use in Forms 2-6, while silent reading was obligatory to use in Forms 7-11. Only two teachers of the seven respondents used the technique of silent reading in their teaching. All the seven teachers applied oral reading in their lessons, one session of which lasted for about 5 to 10 minutes on average.

The most important purpose of reading aloud in the classroom was to practise proper English pronunciation and intonation. In fact, this was the only aim mentioned by the teachers. Also, two teachers mentioned that they applied this technique as it greatly helped inhibited learners to overcome their inhibitions and frustration caused by situations stressful for them; for example, when they had to answer the teacher's questions, i.e. when they had to take risks. On the other hand, weaker learners appeared to be inhibited because they had to perform in front of their peers, therefore they rather preferred silent reading to reading aloud. This is contradictory and only findings of other research instruments—e.g. retrospective learner interviews or classroom observations—can throw light on the explanation of this problem.

To have learners 'read aloud for time'—do speed reading—was not common in the classrooms of the seven teachers, mainly because they did not find it useful. Only one teacher had her learners read aloud for time, especially younger ones, because it was a good possibility for these learners to compete with each other.

Three teachers did not correct mistakes immediately when they heard them. Rather, they made notes of the errors, which were mainly mistakes of improper pronunciation of separate words, and when the reading was finished, the teachers corrected the mistakes and made all the children in the group repeat the correct variant. Four teachers preferred correcting miscues immediately. No teachers mentioned correcting intonation mistakes. One teacher stated that sometimes omission miscues occurred when her learners were reading aloud—most of the times they omitted very short words, like two-letter prepositions or the indefinite article 'a/an'. She corrected these mistakes immediately. The teachers claimed that their learners would learn from the corrections in the long run, but some time needed to pass before they

could consciously use the proper words or phrases. This means that just correcting the mistakes instead of teaching them properly is a ‘waste’ of time, if the learners just listen to their corrections but actually do not learn the words or phrases properly.

Teachers believed that their learners preferred oral reading to silent reading. The reasons they provided for this claim were that oral reading was a possibility for the learners to perform in front of the others, mainly in the junior forms. Also, this provided a kind of competition especially for youngsters. However, older—children in the basic or secondary school—and weaker learners did not like reading aloud: they had a lot of inhibitions, and felt anxiety to perform in front of the others. In general, it can be seen that teachers did perceive their learners loved reading aloud better than silent reading. On the other hand, they admitted that they rarely, if ever, applied silent reading in the classroom. This suggests that children might like to read silently if they sometimes had the opportunity to do it.

In sum, most of the teachers agreed that oral reading alone had little to do with comprehension. This might not have been conscious on their side, but they admitted that reading a text orally and not translating it fully, sentence by sentence, would never result in comprehension. When reading aloud, children pay more attention to trying to pronounce the sounds properly, than trying to understand the meaning of the text.

Finally, it seems that for teachers of English in Transcarpathian Hungarian schools the process of reading means nothing else than reading out loud and practising proper English pronunciation, while they do not pay attention to proper intonation—although it is a purpose of reading aloud claimed by some of the teachers. They do not want their learners to understand immediately what they are reading. Instead, they make learners translate every little part—from separate words through sentences to paragraphs—of a text. This is, in fact, a discrepancy between the teachers’ perception of the reading process and the actual meaning of it. This misconception should be altered.

### 6.1.3 Interviews with Educational Managers

The three interviews yielded both similar and different results. The interview protocol, the piloting of which has been previously described in detail, can be found in Appendix 11. At the very start of each of the three interviews, the researcher explained the construct of reading aloud to the interviewee in order to prevent misunderstanding between the interviewer and the subjects.

In the following, the answers of the educational managers, or methodology consultants, will be discussed question by question.

Question 1: How important do you think it is that learners learn to read well in English at the beginning stage of studying a foreign language?

There was a consensus among the opinions of the three methodology consultants, because they all believed it necessary and important for a learner to learn to read well in the initial stages of his foreign language learning, because this would help him learn foreign language vocabulary better. Anna explained it in this way:

27) It is very important, because I believe that as a child learns to read a word in English, it will be 'recorded' in the child's mind in this way. (Anna)

Question 2: What role does reading aloud play in the language lesson?

Again, the advisors agreed on the importance of reading aloud in the English lessons, although they gave various explanations for it. However, all of them mentioned the role the technique of learner reading aloud played in acquiring proper pronunciation. This fully supports the views expressed by English language teachers in an investigation carried out in Transcarpathia about the purposes of use of this technique in the lessons of English (Huszti, 2003a, b). Clara also added that this technique had a great role in lower primary classes:

28) It obviously has a place in the lesson. After a reading aloud session they speak better, especially in lower primary classes. (Clara)

Question 3. Do you think it depends on the nationality—Hungarian, Ukrainian, or Russian—of the language learner?

There was a divergence of views concerning this question because Anna and Barbara agreed that nationality of the learners influenced the way they read out loud in English, while Clara thought this impact was insignificant and could not be regarded as an influence at all:

29) Nationality has no influence on reading aloud. Perhaps sometimes there are mistakes that are typical for Russian or Hungarian learners, but these are not significant. (Clara)

In contrast, Anna and Barbara believed that learners of different nationalities read aloud in English in different ways, and that Hungarian children were in a very good position concerning this question:

30) Learners' nationality does influence foreign language learning success, and also the way learners read aloud. For some children some languages are easier to learn because of the similarities between their native language and the target language. Hungarian children are advantaged in this respect. (Barbara)

This was further explained by Anna who was certain that

31) … learners of different nationalities read aloud in English in a different way. I think Hungarian children are advantaged because their native language has more sounds than the two Slavonic languages—e.g. in Hungarian, we have a very similar sound to the English one in the word *girl*, which does not exist in Russian or Ukrainian. That is why it is easier for Hungarian children to acquire English pronunciation. Moreover, both English and Hungarian use the Latinate alphabet, whereas Russian and Ukrainian use the Cyrillic one. (Anna)

This view can be supported by the findings of research carried out in Transcarpathia with the aim to define the similarities and differences in pronunciation between Hungarian and Ukrainian learners of English when reading aloud (Huszti, 2001).

Question 4: Based on your experiences, do teachers have learners read aloud in the English lessons in schools with Hungarian language of instruction in Transcarpathia? With what purposes? What benefits can learners or teachers get from this?

All the three experts agreed that teachers used the technique of reading aloud in the English lessons, although Barbara commented that they did not apply it so often as they should have to. When mentioning the benefits learners could get from its application, they were of the same opinion which was most clearly articulated by Clara:

32) First of all, for the learners it's pronunciation. Pupils in the Forms 5 and 6 are very active. And reading is one of the tasks which every pupil can do quite well. That's why they want to read. This is because they practise reading most often. They can read well, and they want to get a good mark with the help of reading. And I think they are motivated in this way. Also, they are not getting bored. Those younger children are eager to listen to their peers. We can't get our older learners in Forms 10 and 11 to read aloud, they don't want to listen to their fellows and their peers don't want to listen to their loud reading, either. But the psychology of younger children is such that they want to listen again and again. (Clara)

Anna mentioned the factors of learners' inhibition and anxiety which she thought were closely connected and she expressed her view that reading aloud helped the child a lot to overcome his inhibitions:

33) Reading aloud has many advantages for those learners who are otherwise often inhibited. These learners can overcome their inhibitions through reading aloud. When the teacher asks the learner orally, the child starts to feel anxious because he is in the focus of attention in the class, and this often inhibits him in giving a correct answer. But when reading aloud, the other learners' attention is directed to the book and the text being read and the child's tension is eased. (Anna)

It is interesting that this opinion had been previously pronounced by a teacher of English working in a school situated in Anna's district. This view is also supported by Stronin (1986) in that oral reading helps learners overcome psychological barriers and fear of beginning to talk in English.

Concerning the benefits English teachers could get from the application of the reading aloud technique in the foreign language lessons, Barbara considered that

34) Through learners' loud reading the teacher can judge how well the learners know English, or how well they can pronounce words. (Barbara)

Question 5: What role do you think reading aloud plays in developing learners' reading skills?

Again, the subjects were of the same opinion that the reading aloud technique bore importance in developing learners' reading skills, though they did not mention which sub-skills they meant exactly (skimming, scanning, etc.) The importance they attached to this technique was explained in a most detailed way by Anna:

35) With reading aloud the child has a chance to learn to read correctly and well. If he reads well, he will learn the words or foreign language vocabulary well and will speak correctly. The learner, who cannot read well, will not only speak incorrectly, but will also write and spell words incorrectly, in my view. (Anna)

Question 6: Does the National Curriculum for Foreign Languages 'prescribe' the use of learners' reading aloud in the English lessons? If so, are there any criteria for this? (E.g. reading aloud for a certain time slot, etc.)?

There was a slight disagreement about the fact whether the National Curriculum for Foreign Languages (1998) announces the use of the reading aloud technique as obligatory in the foreign language classroom. However, all the three interviewees agreed that it was included in the Curriculum implicitly; there were some hints about its use but no clear-cut application criteria exist.

Question 7. Do the educational authorities in Transcarpathia require from teachers of English in Hungarian schools that they use the technique of learners' reading aloud in the English lessons?

The answers to this question were both positive and negative. The latter one by Barbara and Clara presents controversy, namely, that the application of this technique is not forced on the teachers, it is not a 'must' for them, nevertheless, they mostly use this technique, as indicated in the answers to Question 4 of the present interview protocol.

*Summary*

Although there were some points on which the advisors did not agree, on the whole, it can be stated that the interviewees, despite working in different parts or districts of Transcarpathia, agreed and were of the same opinion about most of the crucial issues that were touched upon in the interview.

All the three of them strongly believed in the importance and necessity of the application of the learners' reading aloud technique in the English lessons. They explained that the nationality of the learners had some influence on the way they read aloud and came to the conclusion that Hungarian children had certain advantages.

Based on their experience as methodology advisors, they claimed that the reading aloud technique was widely applied by teachers in schools in the districts they were responsible for. The application of it was not a requirement set by the National Curriculum for Foreign Languages (1998), or the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, so a possible reason why teachers applied this technique might have been that they were aware of and sure about its usefulness and value in English language teaching.

### 6.2 The Macro Level of Miscues: Oral Reading in the Classroom

Twenty one English lessons in seven different schools—three in each—given by the English teachers of the learners participating in the miscue study were observed and recorded with the purpose of getting data to answer Research Question 2 and Research Question 4 (see Chapter 4).

A classroom observation sheet was designed for the purposes of the present study (see Appendix 16) and used during the observation sessions. Only those parts of the recordings were transcribed in which the learners' task was to read aloud a text from their textbooks. These recordings, on average, lasted from six to eighteen minutes, longer than the teachers

admitted in the interviews—saying that such tasks lasted maximum for ten minutes. In one case, in School E, the first observed lesson was a reading lesson, i.e. forty minutes out of forty-five were devoted to only one type of activity, oral reading. The remaining five minutes were spent on organising the classroom—e.g. greeting the learners and checking the attendance at the beginning of the lesson, and giving home assignment, evaluating learners' knowledge and saying good-bye at the end of it. Out of the twenty-one observed lessons, there were only three in which reading aloud did not occur. These were Lesson 2 in School D, Lesson 3 in School F, and Lesson 1 in School G. The number of learners present in the lessons varied from twelve to twenty-five learners. Not every child read aloud during the oral reading tasks, although Teacher G claimed she preferred to have all the learners read in one and the same lesson—the number of learners reading aloud in one and the same lesson ranged from two to fifteen pupils. Most often teachers called on those children who raised their hands showing that they were willing to do the task. It was observed only in four cases in the twenty-one lessons that teachers called on learners who had apparently no intention to do the task and were passive in the lessons and obviously unmotivated to do the task.

The data in the observation sheets were useful when defining learners' reading miscue types and the way how teachers responded to these miscues. The miscues were first identified by the author and then a rater—an English teacher in a local school—was asked to listen to the recordings and identify the miscues. I had explained the miscue types and the miscue coding system beforehand. This was the same coding system that had been worked out for the purposes of the main study of this thesis (see Section 5.5.2). No divergences were found between the author's and the rater's lists of miscues. At the macro level of reading miscues in the eighteen lessons when oral reading took place, 251 miscues were detected: 21 of them were not responded to, while in the case of 230 miscues the teachers responded to the miscues immediately, or provided delayed correction of the miscues. Seven types of miscues were observed in the English lessons, to which teachers either responded or they did not react. They were substitutions (n=129), hesitations (n=34), corrections (n=24), omissions (n=22), intonation miscues (n=20), reversals (n=12), and insertions (n=10). The findings are summarized in Table 23.

As can be seen from Table 23, the most frequent miscue type was substitution (n=129), more than half of the total number of miscues observed during the lessons. This finding confirms the findings in the literature (Beebe, 1980; Rigg, 1988).

| Type of miscue | Way of teacher response to miscue | Number of miscues | TOTAL | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **SUBSTITUTION** | Non-response | 5 | | |
| | Immediate response | 73 | | |
| | Delayed correction | 51 | **129** | **51.39** |
| **OMISSION** | Non-response | 8 | | |
| | Immediate response | 8 | | |
| | Delayed correction | 6 | **22** | **8.76** |
| **REVERSAL** | Non-response | 2 | | |
| | Immediate response | 4 | | |
| | Delayed correction | 6 | **12** | **4.78** |
| **INSERTION** | Non-response | 5 | | |
| | Immediate response | 2 | | |
| | Delayed correction | 3 | **10** | **3.98** |
| **CORRECTION** | Non-response | 2 | | |
| | Immediate response | 15 | | |
| | Delayed correction | 7 | **24** | **9.56** |
| **INTONATION** | Non-response | 6 | | |
| | Immediate response | 11 | | |
| | Delayed correction | 3 | **20** | **7.96** |
| **HESITATION** | Providing the miscue for the learner | 34 | **34** | **13.54** |
| | | **TOTAL** | **251** | **99.97** |

**TABLE 23. Miscues in the English lessons**

Teachers' reactions to miscues were only of three types:

1. they chose to neglect the miscue,
2. they corrected the miscue immediately after they heard it,
3. the teachers provided delayed correction, i.e. they waited until the learner finished reading aloud, and only then did they mention what miscues the child had made.

The examples are taken from the transcripts, following the transcription conventions accepted for the purposes of the present study (see Section 5.2.5). The lesson transcripts were prepared in Hungarian, and the excerpts provided here are in the author's translation.

**Substitution**

When substitutions occurred, teachers treated them in different ways. In Examples 1 and 2, the teacher immediately corrected the substitution and evidently, the learners knew they had to repeat the corrected variant, because they did so without being asked to.

1) T: OK. So we know. *Let's start*. The few introductory sentences will be read for us by Marianna.
   L1: *One day Dmytro Oleksandrovych meets Vera Ivanyivna in the tsenture*
   T: *centre*
   L1: *centre of the town*. (Substitution; Lesson 1, School F)

2) L2: *A kitchen and a bedroom*.
   T: *Bathroom*.
   L2: *Bathroom. We have gas ...* (Substitution; Lesson 2, School F)

In Example 3, the teacher asked the learners to repeat the difficult pronunciation of the word in chorus, while the teacher in Example 4 corrected the substitution immediately, and then left it as it was. She did not ask the learner to repeat the word which could have led to further failure of the learner; instead, the teacher asked for the translation of the word.

3) L1: *First of all I'd like to say that I am from Transcarpia*.
   T: *No*. Let's repeat three times *Transcarpathia*.
   LLL: *Transcarpathia Transcarpathia Transcarpathia*. (Substitution; Lesson 2, School F)

4) L2: *I live in Lviv. It is a big provinal*
   T: *Provincial city.* Good. *I live in Lviv*. How do you translate it? (Substitution; Lesson 1, School D)

Example 5 shows a situation rarely met during the observations, when on hearing the miscue the teacher gives an explanation of the miscue and how to avoid similar ones.

5) L2: *If you hear the answer and knou*
   T: No, no. What did I say about this word? The letter 'k' is mute if it stands before 'n', we don't pronounce it. *Know*
   L2*: Know by the voice your friend or acquaintance.*. (Substitution; Lesson 1, School D)

However, later in the same lesson a girl who had not been paying attention made the same mistake as in Example 5.

Another way of teacher response to substitution miscues was when the teacher corrected the miscue but did not ask for confirmation that the child understood the miscue and was able to improve (Example 6).

6) L4: *when you have deeled*
   T: *dialed*
   L4: *the wrong number*.. (Substitution; Lesson 1, School D)

**Hesitation**

When learners hesitated during oral reading tasks to pronounce a word, teachers most often provided the needed word or phrase, but they did not pay attention to whether learners understood the problems and were able to correct themselves or not. This happened in most schools (Examples 7, 8, and 9). The only exception was School C, where the teacher said the word for the hesitating learner, who then repeated the word, although was not asked to do so (Example 10).

7) L2: *A living room, a dining room, a bedroom, a children's room, and …*
   T: *And of course*. (Hesitation, the teacher provides the correct variant; Lesson 2, School F)

8) L5: *Prolonged buzzer your call has been put thro…*
   T: *Through*.
   L5: *And your number will answer in a moment.* (Hesitation; Lesson 2, School G)

9) L6: *Don't forget apol..*
   T: *Apologize* (Hesitation; Lesson 1, School D)

10) L1: *The yard and the well are be...*
   T: *Behind*
   L1: *behind the house*. (Hesitation; Lesson 2, School C)

**Correction**

Correction miscues were not numerous compared to substitution ones. In Example 11, a correction miscue can be seen when the child first read the word properly, then corrected

herself but in the wrong way. The teacher applied delayed correction, i.e. she waited until the child finished her portion and then she indicated the miscue, although she did not ask the child to repeat the sentence or the phrase.

11) L6: *On Sunday when they came come to the skating-rink they saw an interesting scene.*
T: First you said correctly. *They came.* (Correction miscue with delayed teacher correction; Lesson 2, School C)

**Omission**

Omission miscues were those when learners omitted usually one word. Most often teachers did not pay much attention to these miscues. Even when asked about them, six teachers replied they did not come across such miscues when their learners were reading aloud. There was only one teacher (E) who mentioned her learners sometimes made omission miscues. In the example below (Example 12), it can be seen that the teacher did not react to the omission miscue but helped the learner to overcome his hesitation by providing the word for him.

12) L6: *Don't forget apol.*.
T: *Apologize* (Omission of the word 'to'; Lesson 1, School D)

**Intonation**

Intonation miscues constituted inappropriate use of rising and falling tones. Children found most problems with using the rising tone in 'yes/no' questions instead of the rise-fall used in their mother tongue. In all the 20 cases when intonation miscues occurred the teachers asked the children to repeat the corrected variants.

13) L3: *You don't live in town*.
T: *You don't live in town*?
L3 ((repeats with rising intonation)): *You don't live in town*? (Intonation; Lesson 1, School E)

14) L3: *Is it large*. ((typical Hungarian intonation: rise-fall))
T: *No, is it*? ((rising intonation)) This is a question.
L3: *Is it large*? (Intonation; Lesson 3, School A)

**Reversal**

When learners made reversal miscues, these were mainly instances when they reversed the order of letters in a word (Example 15). Examples when the reader reversed the order of words in a phrase, or phrases in a sentence were not detected.

15) L2: *Yes my five and I will be very glad to see you*.

T: What is written there?

L2: *Five*.

T: Not *five*. You are reading it backwards. *Wife*.

L2: *Wife*. (Reversal; Lesson 1, School B)

**Insertion**

Insertion meant that the learner inserted an extra word or phrase during their reading aloud. Sometimes such miscues were meaningful, but most often they were not. During the observation sessions, only ten insertion miscues were found, five of which were completely ignored, two were corrected immediately and three were corrected later (Example 16).

16) L2: *I have a mother and a my father. My mother is a doctor. She works at a hospital. My father is a worker. He works at a big plant.*

T: You read an extra word, *a my father.* But *my* is not there. *A father.* Could you repeat please? The first sentence in the paragraph.

L2: *I have a mother and a father.*

T: Good. Now translate the whole paragraph please. (Insertion with delayed correction; Lesson 1, School B)

*Summary*

The findings of classroom observation sessions were described in some detail, and examples from lesson transcripts were presented to illustrate and justify the theses about classroom practices in Transcarpathian Hungarian schools when the technique of learners' reading aloud was applied in the lessons. The results showed that the most frequent miscue type was substitution (51.39%). The least frequent was insertion (3.98%). Teachers treated the miscues in different ways: they either ignored them (n=28), or corrected them immediately after learners made them (n=147), or their correction was delayed (n=76). Teachers paid more attention to substitution miscues than to any other type, to such an extent that at times they did not even notice the miscues and let them 'disappear forever'.

### 6.3 Curriculum Analysis Results

The National Curriculum for Foreign Languages (1998) is the official document of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine that determines the goals for learners to achieve in foreign language learning. The curriculum contains the list of conversational topics, grammar structures, and language skills that learners are to acquire. The structure of the Curriculum is concentric (Kurtán, 2001). This means that the teaching content is divided into smaller units. These are taught at all the levels of language teaching from the beginning level to the intermediate level in the secondary school, with the difference that when units are tackled at an upper level of knowledge, the teaching material is wider in scope and more complicated. The positive feature of this type of content arrangement is that learners have the possibility to practise a certain language phenomenon several times, which fosters review and consolidation of the material. On the other hand, the topics reappearing from time to time may demotivate the learners (Kurtán, 2001). This type of arrangement of language teaching content is similar to the spiral arrangement in which the communicative functions and semantic units of language are built around grammatical structures. This arrangement makes it possible to deal with grammar and vocabulary at the same time, as if progressing higher and higher along the curves of a spiral. The advantage of the arrangement of language teaching content in a spiral is that it is based on communicative language functions and it is possible to practise various grammatical structures together with language functions. The disadvantage is that "it is difficult to recognize grammar in this arrangement" (O'Neill, 1972, cited in Kurtán, 2001, p. 116).

The Curriculum consists of three parts. Part I presents thematic topics or areas of communication that learners are to acquire to use in oral speech. There are three main topics reappearing in all the Forms, with several subtopics in each. The main topics are: 1. The learner and his surroundings; 2. Ukraine; 3. The country / countries whose language is being learnt. The topics and subtopics that Form 6 learners have to acquire are shown in Table 24.

| TOPIC | SUBTOPIC |
|---|---|
| 1. The learner and his surroundings | Me and my relatives; The house I live in; The street I live in; My friends, their relatives, and their home; My school, my classroom, and the foreign language lesson; My day and my day off; Sports; Free time activities; Holidays; Helping my parents; Weather |
| 2. Ukraine | Kyiv — the capital of Ukraine; My native town |
| 3.The country / countries whose language is being learned | Basic data on the country whose language is being learned (The UK) |

**TABLE 24. Conversational topics and subtopics in the Curriculum (1998) for Form 6**

Part II of the Curriculum lists the demands concerning the learners' language skills. Separate lists of requirements are given for all the school Forms from Form 5 to Form 11. In Form 6, the requirements regarding reading skills are defined as follows[*]:

> Learners must be able to read aloud (observing orthoepic norms) and silently (with full understanding of the plot) texts that are built on the learned language material. Texts can contain maximum 7% of unfamiliar vocabulary items, including international words and derivatives whose meanings can be easily guessed. Learners must be able to identify the basic idea of a text, and form relations between facts and events. The speed of oral and silent reading is not less than 400 printed characters a minute.

Part III of the Curriculum contains the linguistic material for learners to achieve: phonetics—only in Form 5, vocabulary, and grammar. In the following, the Form 6 language contents are introduced. Table 25 shows the requirements in vocabulary and grammar.

| VOCABULARY | GRAMMAR |
|---|---|
| 500 lexical units including ordinal numerals *first, second, third, fifth*, etc., adjectives *better, best, more, most*, pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions; word formation: the adjective-forming suffix *-ful* | The use of the definite article with ordinal numerals and superlative adjectives; Degrees of comparison of adjectives; The use of Past Simple; The use of Future Simple; Impersonal sentences of the type *It is warm., It is late., It snows.*; Complex objects *I told him to ..., I want her to ...*; Recognition and comprehension of complex sentences with the conjunctions *if, that, because* |

**TABLE 25. Linguistic content in the Curriculum (1998) for Form 6**

Phonetic peculiarities of the English language are only taught in Form 5—the first year of language study—and never revisited formally in the Curriculum. The features include the existence of short and long vowels as well as compound vowels or diphthongs; division of sentences into semantic groups; word and sentence stress; and intonation of simple sentences.

The Curriculum (1998) does not conform to the standards of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (2001). Besides the lexical and grammatical material, and the requirements of the four language skills, it does not mention any competences (e.g. socio-cultural, strategic, etc.) that learners have to acquire. Nor does it state what levels of

[*] Author's translation

knowledge learners are expected to achieve in language learning at the end of their school studies.

Finally, regarding reading as the main focus of the present thesis, the Curriculum (1998) emphasizes two types: oral and silent reading. At the starting stages of language learning, more attention is paid to reading aloud, although silent reading should also be practised in English lessons with the purpose of learners' total comprehension of texts. The intended goal of oral reading is not underlined in the curriculum, it is only indicated that learners should observe orthoepic norms when reading aloud; however, these norms are not specified.

### 6.4 Miscue Analysis

#### 6.4.1 Description of the Learners' Reading Behaviour (Based on the Researcher's Fieldnotes)

When listening to children's reading aloud, the researcher's general opinion about the learners' reading behaviour was noted down, as suggested by Goodman and Burke (1973). These fieldnotes are subjective but are worth considering, as they give some insight into the learners' general reading manner that might provide an explanation for the learners' inability at times to comprehend the essence of the meaning of the two texts. Also, they might contextualise the more detailed findings on miscues.

The subjects of the research were asked to read from the printed version of the selected texts, while the researcher was following the reading on separate worksheet copies and noting the miscues as they occurred. In these worksheet copies, there was enough space between the lines for the researcher to note down the miscues. Also, at the bottom of each

copy, the researcher noted down the most characteristic features of reading done by the children. These comments were written down immediately after a child's reading a text, during the time they were looking through the following text silently with the purpose of getting familiarized with it.

The comments generally concerned the way children read the texts (Category 1), what their pronunciation and intonation was like (Category 2), whether they paid attention to different punctuation marks (Category 3) which is important in oral reading, and whether it was obvious from the reading behaviours that the learners understood the essential ideas of the texts they had read (Category 4).

All the reading procedures (88) by the forty-four learners were characterized in terms of the four categories described above. The most typical notes made about the way learners read the texts were *sporadic, interrupted, not fluent, as if learners were reading separate words on a word list* (in thirty-eight cases), *nice, fluent, good* (in twenty-five cases), *extremely slow* (in ten cases), *fluent but not accurate, with a lot of miscues* (in four cases), *fast* (in one case).

The notes in Category 2 related to the learners' pronunciation and intonation. The most serious problem with pronunciation was that learners mispronounced many words (*lots of pronunciation miscues*, in six cases). Learners also had problems with stresses (in

three cases), and they misused the English intonation patterns (c.f. Coulthard, 1985; McCarthy, 1991; Brazil, 1995) — in twenty-two cases. In five cases learners used typical Hungarian intonation patterns, as if reading sentences in their mother tongue. The note *nice pronunciation and proper intonation patterns* was mentioned in twenty-two cases. Most of these learners came from one and the same school.

Based on the fieldnotes in Category 3, it can be concluded that many learners—in fifteen cases—did not pay any attention to punctuation marks, e.g. colons, commas, and full-stops. This is also connected to intonation problems as neglecting punctuation marks leads to improper use of intonation patterns,

e.g. rising tone with commas, and falling tone with full-stops.

The last category—Category 4—of fieldnotes concerned the learners' comprehension of the texts. In twelve cases it was evident and clear that the learners did not comprehend the essence of the texts they were reading. In four cases it was obvious from the fluent reading that the learners understood the text.

These results led to some interesting interpretations and reasons of why learner miscues might have occurred. Learners concentrated on being accurate when reading a text out loud—this was said by one of the subjects in the retrospective learner interview, see Section 6.1.1). They intended to and made

great efforts to read without ‘errors’ or miscues, therefore their reading became extremely slow. This finding is in line with one of the objections to the use of reading aloud manifested by Dwyer (1983). In addition, these findings let to conclude that English intonation is not properly taught in some Transcarpathian Hungarian schools, despite the requirement announced in the National Curriculum for Foreign Languages (1998). This also supports the findings of Kota (2001), who conducted an empirical study about the teaching of English pronunciation and intonation in four Hungarian schools in a Transcarpathian urban area.

**6.4.2 Analysis of Learners' Miscues Committed during the Reading Aloud Recordings: Major Findings**

The main study detailed in this dissertation investigated the oral reading performance in English of forty-four twelve-year-old Transcarpathian Hungarian schoolchildren who had been learning English as a foreign language for two years. The purpose of the research was to analyse learners' miscues committed when reading aloud two selected and piloted texts in order to tap into how non-native readers process and interpret English texts. The analysis was done with the help of a revised version of the Goodman Taxonomy of Reading Miscues (Goodman & Burke, 1973; see Section 3.5 and Appendix 4). The miscues are described in terms of their graphic and phonemic proximity, syntactic and semantic

acceptability, correction, semantic change—or meaning change, as referred to by Tatlonghari, 1984—grammatical category, and intonation, i.e. altogether eight miscue analysis categories. In the taxonomy, there are some other categories which the present study does not deal with. For example, the taxonomy singles out a separate category in which dialect miscues involving vocabulary or structural changes are coded. This applies to native English readers, but because the subjects of the present study are all non-native children learning English as a foreign language, dialect miscues are irrelevant in this situation. Allologs are not dealt with, either, as no such miscues were coded. This is true for some other categories as well—transformation,

submorphemic level, bound and combined morpheme level, word and free morpheme level, phrase level, clause level, and the observed response (OR) in visual periphery.

The overall word count of the two selected texts was 480 words. The participants made 1567 miscues during reading both of the texts out loud. Table 26 summarises the quantity of miscues committed by the subjects of the study.

| | Correction | | | Repetition | Omission | Insertion | Substitution | | | Reversal | Hesitation | Pronunciation | | **TOTAL** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Corrected | Uncorrected | Good to wrong | | | | Non-word | Accept | Non-accept | | | Stress | Intonation | |
| Number of miscues | 57 | 27 | 5 | 73 | 61 | 21 | 712 | 124 | 272 | 11 | 22 | 67 | 115 | 1567 |

**TABLE 26. Number of miscues in the main study**

The miscues represented eight broad categories: correction (89=5.6%), repetition (73=4.6%), omission (61=3.9%), insertion (21=1.4%), substitution (1108=70.7%),

reversal (11=0.7%), hesitation (22=1.4%), and pronunciation (182=11.6%). The correction category had three subgroups: miscues corrected by the reader (57=3.6%), miscues left uncorrected (27=1.7%), and the appropriate ER “corrected” to a miscue by the reader (5=0.3%). The substitution category, which contained the biggest number of miscues, was also subdivided into three groups: substitution with a non-word that does not exist and therefore has no meaning in English (712=45.4%), substitution acceptable in the given situation (124=7.9%), and substitution not acceptable (272=17.4%). The pronunciation category also had subgroups: stress (67=4.3%) and intonation (115=7.3%).

As was already established in Section 5.3.1 on instrument piloting, in Y. Goodman's (1976) study, the subjects produced the following types of miscues in order of occurrance: substitutions, omissions, insertions, and reversals. In the present study, substitutions were the most frequent miscues (70.7 %), and the least frequent miscues were reversals (0.7 %). These were the similarities between the two investigations. However, the present study's findings showed a different order of frequency of miscues. The second most often occurring type of miscue was pronunciation, followed by corrections and repetitions. Omission miscues came fifth, while insertion miscues came seventh in the order of frequency, with hesitation miscues in

between. Goodman's study was conducted with native speaker children, whereas the learners who participated in this research were non-native learners of English. This leads to the conclusion that Transcarpathian Hungarian learners aged twelve read differently from native learners of English and the order of frequency of reading miscues they commit is dissimilar. This is a major finding as several miscue studies conducted with non-native learners claim that their results prove that non-natives read in the same way in English as natives (c.f. Barrera, 1980; Romatowski, 1980; Tatlonghari, 1984; etc.).

The miscues per hundred words (MPHW) were calculated as a measure to provide information on the quantity of miscues

committed by learners (Mott, 1980; Rigg, 1988). The mean MPHW in the study was 7.4, which means that on average, learners made seven miscues in hundred words. This number also indicates that about 93%—i.e. 100-7.4=92.—of the texts were read without miscues by learners. This result shows that learners paid much attention to accuracy as 93% is a high percentage concerning loud reading in English by non-native learners. At least, this indicator is higher than the one in Rigg's (1988) study, where this was 90%, i.e. on average, the subjects in Rigg's research made 10 MPHW.

**Substitutions**

The category of substitution miscues constitutes the largest category in number—1108 miscues that make up 70.7 % of the total of miscues. They were examined from the point of view of the degree of graphic and phonemic similarity, and their semantic and syntactic acceptability in the given context was also investigated. Substitutions were also analysed for their correspondence to the grammatical category of the ER, and for any semantic distortion that the OR might have caused in the texts. The number of substitution miscues in these groups for analysis is presented in Table 27.

| Category of analysis | Substitutions (n=1108) |
|---|---|
| Graphic similarity / proximity | 907 (81.85 %) |
| Phonemic similarity / proximity | 868 (78.33 %) |
| Semantic acceptability | 124 (11.19 %) |

| | |
|---|---|
| Syntactic acceptability | 352 (31.76 %) |
| Grammatical category / function | 352 (31.76 %) |
| Semantic / meaning change | 805 (51.37 %) |

**TABLE 27. Substitutions in the main study**

Table 27 shows that 81.85 % of the substitution miscues resembled the words or phrases in print, and 78.33 % was similar in sound form to the ERs. Although 31.76 % of the substitutions had the same grammatical function as the ERs and were syntactically acceptable, only 11.19 % of the miscues resembled the ERs and were semantically acceptable. Complete change of meaning of the words in print was observed in 15 miscues that made up 1.35 % of the total sum of substitutions.

**Pronunciation**

These miscues were found of two types: stress (67=4.27 %) and intonation (115=7.33 %). They originate from the dissimilarities in the stress and intonation patterns of English and Hungarian (c.f. Brazil, 1995; Bencédy, Fábián, Rácz, & Velcsov, 1988). Neither the stress miscues nor the intonation ones were acceptable semantically or syntactically. The most typical miscues in stress were the ones in which learners stressed the first syllable of the words—this is identical with the fixed word stress in Hungarian, i.e. the first syllable of all the words gets greater prominence in pronunciation. For example, in the sentence below, the reader committed a stress miscue because she accented the first syllable of the word ‘idea’ instead of the second one: “I have an idea,” said Milly. Several learners made this stress miscue which might be due to the fact that this word also exists in Hungarian having an identical meaning of ‘thought’, but as it was emphasized before, the stress pattern is different.

The most common intonation miscue occurred in interrogative sentences starting with question words such as who?, what?, why?, how?, etc. This situation again mirrors the Hungarian pattern of rising intonation instead of the falling one, e.g. “What will we do now?” —pronounced with a rising tone.

**Corrections**

Correction miscues were the third most frequent type (89=5.67 %). These miscues were treated in three different ways: more than half of them (57=64 %) were words that were first miscued by the learners, but later learners went back in their reading and corrected the miscues successfully. There were 27 (30 %) cases when the learners made attempts to correct

the miscues but without any success: these miscues remained uncorrected. There were 5 examples (6 %) of correction miscues when the learners first produced the ER, but decided to 'correct' it in such a way that the OR did not resemble the ER, i.e. learners abandoned the correct response. These miscues were syntactically acceptable; however, the OR did not show semantic closeness to the ER.

**Repetitions**

Repetition miscues were not numerous in the study (73=4.65 %). These were mainly words that were repeated due to the learners' anxiety to perform in the presence of the researcher. The graphic and phonemic proximity was identical with the ER.

**Omissions**

Omission miscues are words or phrases, or parts of words that are omitted by readers, usually unconsciously. Learners most often omitted short one-syllable words like the definite or the indefinite article. When learners omitted parts of certain words, these usually were the inflexions at the end of the words (e.g. the plural ending -s, the past simple ending of regular verbs -ed, etc.). In the example below, the learner omitted the last letter of the third person possessive adjective 'its': "An ant had its home under the same tree."

There was a learner (D4) who deliberately made omission miscues during her reading. When asked why she did this, she answered she did not recognize the words and did not understand them either, so she could not pronounce them.

**Hesitations**

There were 22 (1.4 %) hesitation miscues found among the total sum of miscues. These were the cases when the learners stopped reading and hesitated, but after three or four seconds they continued the task. If they spent more time than that on thinking and recognizing a word, they were helped with the part of the text that caused difficulties for them.

**Insertions**

This type was observed in 21 (1.34 %) miscues. Most frequently, the definite article was inserted in front of proper names; for example: "Let me help," said the Ziggy.

**Reversals**

The least frequent miscue type was the reversal miscue (11=0.7 %). Either letters of one word or the word order of a phrase in a reversed order is represented by a reversal miscue. The following example was found in the reading of Learner F9:

ER: He saw the hunter. OR: He was the hunter.

In this case, the miscue is syntactically acceptable; the ER and the OR have the same grammatical function. However, the OR is unacceptable semantically if the whole context of the OR is taken into consideration.

In the example below, Learner F22 reversed the order of the words in the phrase he had to read:

ER: 'My friend is in trouble …' OR: 'My friend in is trouble …'

**Graphic and phonemic proximity**

Two types were defined within these categories of miscue analysis: high and low degrees. When the graphic and phonemic similarity between the ER and the OR was high, it meant that the observed response resembled very closely the actual word in print. When these similarities were of low degree, it most often meant that there was a low level of sound-symbol correspondence. Examples are presented in Table 28.

| ER | OR | Graphic similarity | Phonemic similarity |
|---|---|---|---|
| with | white | high | low |
| he | the | high | low |
| friend | fried | high | low |
| one | on | high | low |
| thought | caught | low | high |
| got | go | high | high |
| was | wash | high | high |
| must | much | high | high |
| ant | aunt | high | high |
| us | use | high | high |

**TABLE 28. Degrees of graphic and phonemic similarity of miscues**

Table 28 supports the view of Oakhill and Yuill (1995), who consider that at the early stages of reading learners tend to rely mainly on the first letters of words when trying to recognize them.

### 6.4.3 Miscues of Individual Learners

In this part of the thesis, the miscues of six learners are dealt with in some detail. These learners are C10, F2, and G13—successful readers—and B14, C7, and E5—unsuccessful readers. They were selected because during the retrospective learner interviews they were

most able to give reasons why they committed certain miscues. Moreover, this mix of strong—achieving the mean retelling and comprehension scores or above—and weak pupils —whose retelling and comprehension scores were well below the means—was believed to demonstrate the differences in reading of those learners who showed good comprehension of the essence of the stories they had to read aloud and those pupils who comprehended very little of the texts.

This section contains general information about every learner: their codes, school mark in English reading—the highest possible mark is 12, c.f. Section 2.3—and percentage scores of retelling and comprehension. Also, the learners were assigned pseudonyms to personalize the descriptions. The researcher's notes taken while the learners were performing the oral reading tasks are also given here to make these descriptions more lively and informative.

Table 29 shows the number and types of miscues the selected six learners made in both texts. Appendix 17 contains the worksheet copies of the selected six learners with all the miscues they made while reading two texts.

| | Correction | | | Repetition | Omission | Insertion | Substitution | | | Reversal | Pronunciation | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Learner | Corrected | Uncorrected | Good to wrong | | | | Non-word | Acceptable | Non-accept | | Stress | Intonation | **TOTAL** |
| C10 | 1 | | | | | | 15 | 1 | 2 | | 1 | 1 | **21** |
| F2 | | | | 1 | | | 8 | 1 | | | 1 | 2 | **13** |
| G13 | 1 | | | | 1 | | 1 | 1 | | | 1 | | **5** |
| B14 | | | 1 | 3 | | | 27 | 3 | 13 | 1 | | 1 | **49** |
| C7 | 1 | 7 | | 8 | 1 | 3 | 25 | | 7 | 1 | | 5 | **58** |
| E5 | 3 | | | | | | 23 | 2 | 9 | 1 | 1 | | **39** |
| **TOTAL** | **6** | **7** | **1** | **12** | **2** | **3** | **99** | **8** | **31** | **3** | **4** | **9** | **186** |

**TABLE 29. Number and types of miscues committed by selected learners (n=6)**

First, the miscues of strong pupils are presented and then those of the three weak ones. In the observed responses (OR) of the learners the miscues are underlined for easier recognition.

1) Code: C10

Name: Margaret

School mark in English reading: 10

Researcher's notes: Sporadic reading with Hungarian intonation patterns at times

Retelling score: 46.27%

Comprehension score: 75%

Although her reading was not fluent with several substitution miscues and some mother tongue intonation patterns, Margaret's comprehension score (75%) indicates that she understood the stories quite well. Her substitution miscues were often graphically similar to the ER, for example:

ER … the ant got into the water. OR … the ant got into the weather.

ER 'What shall we do?' asked Polly the Parrot. OR 'Wat shall we do?' asked Polly the Parrot.

She showed the tendency of beginning readers to use graphic clues extensively (Southgate, Arnold, & Johnson, 1981). This was proved by the fact that most of the substitutions she made grapho-phonemically resembled the ERs.

When asked about the reason why she substituted 'wat' for 'what', Margaret answered that there was a rule that in closed syllables ending in a consonant, letter 'a' must be read as in 'bat' or 'rat'. This shows that the learner knew the rule but was not fully aware of its application in practice.

She also used a Hungarian intonation pattern in 'wh'-questions, for example:

ER 'But who will pull it out?' OR 'But who will pull it ↑out?'

Once she noticed that her miscue did not make sense, Margaret went back and corrected it:

ER An ant had its home under the same tree. OR An aunt / an ant had its home under the same tree.

This was a sign that she was aware of the context.

2) Code: F2

Name: Angela

School mark in English reading: 10

Researcher's notes: Slow but accurate and fluent reading with occasional miscues. Obvious comprehension of the texts. Paying attention to punctuation marks

Retelling score: 69.22%

Comprehension score: 81.25%

Throughout the two texts Angela's reading was slow but accurate. She made only a few miscues. It was evident from the way she read that she understood both texts. This claim is supported by Angela's comprehension score (81.25%).

Once Angela substituted the verb ‘put’ with a non-word ‘paht’. For example,

ER … he put a net under the tree. OR … he paht a net under the tree.

In the retrospective interview, she was asked why she read the vowel ‘u’ as in the word ‘but’. She answered that they learned a reading rule which said that ‘u’ in closed syllables should be read as in ‘but’ (c.f. Section 2.4 and Appendix 1). In this case, the pupil generalized a rule she had learned without being aware of the existence of exceptions.

Although the pace of her reading was very slow, Angela managed to maintain a natural intonation. In two cases Angela used a typical Hungarian intonation pattern in ‘wh’-questions, although these miscues did not disturb her in understanding because the question marks as graphical clues indicated that these were interrogative sentences.

ER ‘What is wrong?’ they asked. OR ‘What is ↑wrong?’ they asked.

ER ‘Why is Harry moaning and groaning so loudly?’ OR ‘Why is Harry moaning and groaning so ↑loudly?’

3) Code: G13

Name: Steven

School mark in English reading: 9

Researcher’s notes: Quite good reading, although improper intonation and pronunciation at some places in the texts

Retelling score: 58.22%

Comprehension score: 87.5%

Steven’s reading was fluent, although he made several substitution, reversal, and omission miscues. His substitutions were graphically similar to the ER but unacceptable both syntactically and semantically, for example:

ER An ant had its home under the same tree. OR An ant had its home under the some tree.

ER The pigeon and the ant were good friends. OR The pigeon and the ant where good friends.

Steven read relatively quickly, which might have caused his omission miscues. He tended to omit short words or suffixes which basically did not alter the meaning of the text, therefore were accepted semantically:

ER … and brought the ant safely on the land. OR … and brought ant safely on the land.

ER He wanted to catch the pigeon. OR He want to catch the pigeon.

Southgate, Arnold and Johnson (1981) also consider that when short elements of the text are omitted, it possibly means that the reader was processing the content too quickly for accurate oral reproduction.

A typical intonation miscue that occurred in all the schools was also made by Steven. This is using a Hungarian intonation pattern in a 'wh'-question. For example,

ER 'What is wrong?' they asked. OR 'What is ↥wrong?' they asked.

4) Code: B14

Name: Emily

School mark in English reading: 9

Researcher's notes: fluent reading with occasional miscues, but obviously little understanding

Retelling score: 25.6%

Comprehension score: 25%

Most of the miscues that Emily made were substitutions. There were 43 such miscues out of which there were 27 non-words, 13 substitutions that were acceptable neither syntactically nor semantically, and 3 words that fitted the context and could be accepted semantically and syntactically, although grammatically represented incorrect forms. These were mainly tense forms as demonstrated in the following examples:

ER Then the ant ran to the pigeon … OR Then the ant run to the pigeon …

ER Later, Polly came back with Ella, the Elephant. OR Later, Polly come back with Ella, the Elephant.

Non-word substitutions included such examples as:

ER Then the ant flew down, picked up the leaf, and brought the ant safely on the land.

OR Then the ant flev down, picked up the leaf, and brok the ant safely on the land.

Emily made some substitutions that were unacceptable both syntactically and semantically. For example,

ER A friend in need is a friend indeed. OR A friend is need is a friend indeed.

Emily made three repetition miscues that possibly showed her anxiety and eagerness to get over the task of reading aloud quickly.

ER The pigeon and the ant were good friends. OR The pigeon pigeon and the ant were good friends.

ER … and the ant got into the water. OR … and the ant got into into the water.

Emily's other miscues were: one reversal, one intonation and one good to wrong correction. For example,

ER He saw the hunter … OR He was the hunter …

ER Harry moaned and groaned. OR Harry moaned and ↑groaned.

ER A friend in need is a friend indeed. OR A friend freend in need is a friend indeed.

Out of the 49 miscues that were made by Emily only seven were such that did not disturb her comprehension of the text—three repetitions, three acceptable substitutions, and one intonation miscue. All the others, especially the 27 non-words can be considered to have had a negative and harmful effect on Emily's text comprehension that was proved by her retelling and comprehension scores as well.

5) Code: C7

Name: David

School mark in English reading: 6

Researcher's notes: the child is obviously anxious before performing the task; poor reading without intonation, very little understanding

Retelling score: 16.43%

Comprehension score: 6.25%

David's most frequent type was the substitution miscue, among which there were 27 non-words and 7 non-acceptable substitutions. The following examples present such miscues:

ER The pigeon saw the ant in the water … OR The pigeon saw the int in the water.

ER My friend is in trouble, I must help him. OR My friend is in trool, I moosht help him.

ER I have a better idea … OR I have a Betty idea …

ER He threw a leaf in the water and told the ant to climb on it. OR He threw a leaf in the weather and told the ant to child on it.

David made a relatively large number of repetition miscues (8) compared to the other pupils selected for this detailed analysis. He usually repeated short one-syllable words. This might be explained by his great anxiety before the task of oral reading.

ER You saved my life. OR You saved my my life.

ER My friend will be in trouble … OR My friend friend will be in trouble …

ER Then out of the jungle crept a mouse. OR Then out of the jungle crept crept a mouse.

87.5% of David's correction miscues were left uncorrected. It means that he attempted at words at least twice, in the first case he produced a response different from the expected one, and in the second case he either repeated the wrong response or came up with another variant which did not resemble the ER, either. For example,

ER They pushed the rock over the cliff. OR They parshed pusheed the rock over the cliff.

ER Harry stopped moaning and groaning. OR Harry stopped moaning and grooning grunning.

Only once did David manage to correct his miscue successfully, i.e. he first produced a miscue, immediately realized it, went back in reading and corrected his own words; for example,

ER … and she flew off. OR … and see she flew off.

David also inserted three words in the texts he read and reversed the order of syllables in one word.

ER The pigeon flew away. OR The pigeon flew and away.

ER One day a hunter came to their tree. OR One day a terhun came to their tree.

Numerous was the number of David's intonation miscues compared to his total (5), although when asked about them in the retrospective interview, he admitted he had not even noticed them. Also, he did not feel these intonation miscues disturbed him in understanding the stories. At least, this must be true as he might have had more serious problems in comprehension than the intonation miscues he had made.

ER They tied he vine to Ella. OR They tied the vine to ↥Ella.

ER Ella saw the mouse and took off running very fast. OR Ella saw the mouse and took off running very ↥fast.

6) Code: E5

Name: Betty

School mark in English reading: 7

Researcher's notes: interrupted reading without proper intonation; sometimes reading as if reading a word list

Retelling score: 18.26%

Comprehension score: 12.5%

It was interesting to note that Betty perceived her reading as very problematic in terms of accuracy and fluency, but she claimed that understanding was easy for her—based on the results of the retrospective learner interviews. However, her retelling and comprehension scores do not support this view of hers.

It is true that Betty had difficulties with accuracy and fluency. She made 23 non-word substitutions; for example,

ER I have a horrible, terrible toothache. OR I have a horrible, terrible touthy.

ER Milly went off to find a vine. OR Milly went off to find a veeny.

Besides these non-words, Betty produced two acceptable and nine non-acceptable substitutions. For example,

ER The pigeon flew away. OR The pigeon fly away.

ER Then the ant ran to the pigeon … OR Then the ant run to the pigeon …

Although these substitutions are grammatically incorrect—the -s inflexion of 3rd person singular is missing in both cases—semantically they are acceptable as the verb forms 'fly' and 'flew' have the similar meaning of 'moving in the air with wings', as well as 'run' and 'ran express similar meanings—'go faster than a walk'.

Non-acceptable substitutions by Betty included:

ER An ant had its home under the same tree. OR An aunt had its home under the some tree.

ER The pigeon and the ant were good friends. OR He pigeon and the ant were good friends.

ER … the ant got into the water. OR … the ant got into the weather.

ER … picked up the leaf … OR … picked up the life …

Betty managed to correct three miscues when she noticed she had made them. In all the instances she stopped reading, went back in the text and retried to read the words with success.

ER Harry Hippo awoke early one morning. OR Harry Hippo awoke early on one morning.

ER The pigeon and the ant were good friends. OR The pigeon and he the ant were good friends.

ER You saved my life. OR You saved me my life.

Betty made one reversal miscue, for example: ER 'I will,' said Milly the Gorilla. OR 'I will,' said Milly the Gloria. In this reversal miscue the pupil changed the sequence of sounds in a word and got another one, with full meaning—a female name. What is interesting about

this reversal miscue is that during the retelling, Betty consistently spoke about Gloria as a character of the story together with Milly, Harry, Ella and Polly.

Betty also made one miscue in stress—ER ‘I have an idea,’ said Milly. OR “I have an 'idea,’ said Milly.—but it did not cause problems in understanding because it occurred due to the fact that Betty was unfamiliar with this word. So, the main problem was not caused by the improper use of the stress, but by the lack of knowledge of the vocabulary item.

In summary, the six learners introduced in this section ranged from poor—Emily, David, and Betty—to good comprehenders—Margaret, Angela, and Steven. Their reading can be characterized along a continuum, at the one end of which is sporadic, not fluent and inaccurate oral reading, and at the other end is fluent and accurate reading aloud. The miscues committed by the learners were of seven types—correction, repetition, omission, substitution, reversal, insertion, pronunciation. The most frequent miscues committed by the six selected learners were substitutions—non-words, non-acceptable words, and acceptable ones. This result is in total correspondence with the findings obtained in the main miscue study of 44 learners.

The final conclusions of this descriptive analysis can be drawn as follows:

- Both weak and strong pupils make substitution miscues most frequently.
- These substitution miscues most often resemble the ER grapho-phonemically.
- Omissions are usually short one-syllable words or inflexions, e.g. the past simple ending -ed of regular verbs.
- Such omissions are usually semantically acceptable; therefore, they do not alter the meaning of a text greatly.
- Intonation miscues—e.g. using Hungarian intonation patterns in questions—do not usually disturb learners in comprehension as they have graphical clues—like question marks—at their disposal that can help in understanding.

## 6.5 Comprehension Measures

### 6.5.1 Retelling

The learners were asked to retell the plot of the texts they had read out loud. They were expected to mention events, characters, and themes that happened and appeared in the texts. Table 30 summarizes the maximum scores that a learner could achieve in retelling what they understood of the texts.

| | **Events** | **Characters** | **Themes** | **TOTAL** |
|---|---|---|---|---|

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **TEXT 1** | 28 | 3 | 2 | **33** |
| **TEXT 2** | 41 | 7 | 2 | **50** |
| **TOTAL** | **69** | **10** | **4** | **83** |

**TABLE 30. Maximum retelling scores for one learner**

Table 30 shows that a learner who was able to mention all the events in both texts when retelling, name all the characters of the two stories, and indicate the themes the stories were built on, could achieve a maximum of 83 (100%) points on retelling. Unfortunately, there were no such learners. It is evident from Table 30 that the raw total score is heavily weighted in favour of the 'events' score. The proportions of 'events', 'characters', and 'themes' scores are given in Table 31.

| | **Events** | **Characters** | **Themes** | **TOTAL** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **TEXT 1** | 84.84% | 9.09% | 6.06% | **39.75%** |
| **TEXT 2** | 82% | 14% | 4% | **60.24%** |
| **TOTAL** | **83.13%** | **12.04%** | **4.81%** | **99.98%≈100%** |

**TABLE 31. Proportions of scores in the retelling**

Because of the heavy weighting of 'events', percentage scores for each category will be reported instead of raw scores, resulting in equal weighting for the three categories in the total score. The mean retelling scores of the 44 research participants are presented in Table 32.

The grand total data in the 'Characters' (58.86%) and 'Themes' (48.29%) categories are higher than in the 'Events' (15.12%) category. This indicates that learners were generally able to comprehend, remember and recall the characters of the two texts and the general themes they were about. However, they had difficulty in remembering or understanding all the many events in the stories. The ratio of 15.12% is a clear indicator of the fact that on the whole learners either understood very little of the events of the stories or could not remember them. Given the number of events, it is hardly surprising that relatively few were recalled, and it is suggested that the figures for characters and themes present a more meaningful picture of their comprehension.

| | | **Events** | **Characters** | **Themes** | **TOTAL** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **TEXT 1** | **Maximum achievable scores** | 1232 (100%) | 132 (100%) | 88 (100%) | **100%** |
| | **Mean scores** | 232 (18.83%) | 84 (63.63%) | 56 (63.63%) | **48.70%** |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **achieved** | | | | |
| **TEXT 2** | **Maximum achievable scores** | 1804 (100%) | 308 (100%) | 88 (100%) | **100%** |
| | **Mean scores achieved** | 227 (12.5%) | 175 (56.8%) | 29 (32.9%) | **34.07%** |
| **TOTAL** | **Maximum achievable scores** | 3036 (100%) | 440 (100%) | 176 (100%) | **100%** |
| | **Scores achieved** | **459 (15.12%)** | **259 (58.86%)** | **85 (48.29%)** | **40.76%** |

**TABLE 32. Retelling scores (raw scores and percentage scores) of the participants (n=44)**

Some learners stated that they did not understand much detail from what they had read; for example, they said they did not know the meanings of certain words[*]: 'I don't know what 'pigeon' means' (Learners C3, D7, F4, F8, G2, G10, G15), although some learners were able to deduce the meanings of words and phrases from the context: 'I don't know what 'pigeon' means, but he lived on a tree so he must be a bird of some kind' (Learner F8).

Another case when the learner made use of semantic clues is demonstrated in the following example:

> The story is about Harry Hippo, who woke up early one morning, because he had a terrible ache. His wife Harriet and his friends Milly, Ziggy, Polly and Ella, all wanted to help Harry somehow but they couldn't. I think they managed in the end, because Harry was happy, that's why. (Learner F17)

This learner (F17) summarized the essence of the story of Text 2, and his general retelling score was 67.59%—7 points (17.07%) for 'events', 6 points (85.71%) for 'characters', and 2 points (100%) for 'themes'—even though he could not recall all the events in the text.

Twenty-one learners (A16, B1, B9, C4, C6, C10, D9, D14, F1, F2, F3, F7, F10, F14, F15, F19, G9, G10, G13, G14, G19) were able to retell the gist of the two texts well—their retelling scores were 41% (mean percentage) or above. These learners also reported on the

[*] The retelling was done in the native language of the learners. The excerpts here are given in the author's translation.

textual clues they used to deduce meaning from the text. For example, Learner F2 was able to understand in Text 2 that Harry Hippo's tooth hurt because

> … one morning Harry woke up and he said OH, AH. I think we say such things when something hurts us. And then, there's the word 'tooth' which can also hurt…. (Learner F2)

When retelling Text 2, Learner F3 made use of a semantic clue when he interpreted 'gorilla' as a 'monkey':

> There's Harriet, Harry's wife, Milly the monkey, Ziggy the lion, Polly the bird who flies, and Ella the elephant. (Learner F3)

There was a case when a learner used a graphic clue in comprehending the meaning of the text:

> The animals talk to each other much and they put many questions, because there are many question marks in the text. (Learner F1)

Retelling might not be the best measure of checking learners' comprehension because it also requires a good memory, as one of the learners pointed out:

> This is a story and there are animals in it. They all have names: Harry, Ella, Gorilla, Polly, … Ziggy, … and … Milly. There was a gorilla, an elephant, and … I can't enumerate any other because I just don't remember. (Learner D9)

In sum, the results of the retelling show that most of the learners could not recall the stories in detail, although there was evidence that they understood the gist. One of the reasons for this was indicated by Learner F4 when stating that

> …I didn't pay attention to the plot because I was focusing on how to read and pronounce the words …. (Learner F4)

The total percentage scores of learners for both texts in the three different categories—events, characters, and themes—are presented in Table 33.

| Learner | Events | Characters | Themes | TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **A16** | 40.58 | 85.71 | 100 | **75.43** |
| **B1** | 12.1 | 45.23 | 75 | **44.11** |
| **B9** | 20.46 | 45.23 | 75 | **46.89** |
| **B14** | 3 | 23.8 | 50 | **25.6** |
| **C3** | 4.78 | 16.66 | 0 | **7.14** |
| **C4** | 34.27 | 100 | 100 | **78.09** |
| **C5** | 3 | 38.09 | 25 | **22.03** |
| **C6** | 17.46 | 47.61 | 75 | **46.69** |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **C7** | 8.44 | 15.87 | 25 | **16.43** |
| **C8** | 4.78 | 38.09 | 0 | **14.29** |
| **C10** | 11.45 | 52.37 | 75 | **46.27** |
| **C12** | 3.57 | 47.61 | 25 | **25.39** |
| **D4** | 6 | 61.9 | 25 | **30.96** |
| **D7** | 8.35 | 38.09 | 50 | **32.14** |
| **D9** | 13.32 | 69.04 | 50 | **44.12** |
| **D14** | 16.8 | 85.71 | 50 | **50.83** |
| **E1** | 6.57 | 54.75 | 50 | **37.1** |
| **E2** | 13.71 | 40.47 | 50 | **34.72** |
| **E4** | 7.22 | 69.04 | 25 | **33.75** |
| **E5** | 2.43 | 52.37 | 0 | **18.26** |
| **E6** | 10.88 | 40.47 | 50 | **33.78** |
| **E11** | 1.78 | 45.23 | 0 | **15.67** |
| **E13** | 4.78 | 61.9 | 25 | **30.56** |
| **F1** | 22.33 | 69.04 | 50 | **47.12** |
| **F2** | 30.61 | 77.07 | 100 | **69.22** |
| **F3** | 34.92 | 100 | 75 | **69.97** |
| **F4** | 10.14 | 52.37 | 25 | **29.17** |
| **F7** | 24.04 | 54.75 | 75 | **51.26** |
| **F8** | 2.43 | 28.57 | 25 | **18.66** |
| **F10** | 52.3 | 100 | 75 | **75.76** |
| **F14** | 12.67 | 61.9 | 100 | **58.19** |
| **F15** | 13.32 | 61.9 | 100 | **58.4** |
| **F17** | 10.32 | 59.52 | 50 | **39.94** |
| **F18** | 12.67 | 40.47 | 50 | **34.38** |
| **F19** | 11.92 | 61.9 | 50 | **41.27** |
| **F22** | 8.35 | 61.9 | 0 | **23.41** |
| **G2** | 19.16 | 76.18 | 25 | **40.11** |
| **G5** | 20.46 | 69.04 | 25 | **38.16** |
| **G9** | 41.03 | 100 | 50 | **63.67** |
| **G10** | 26.21 | 50 | 75 | **50.4** |
| **G13** | 31.83 | 92.85 | 50 | **58.22** |
| **G14** | 16.24 | 76.18 | 50 | **47.47** |
| **G15** | 8.35 | 64.28 | 25 | **32.54** |
| **G19** | 35.01 | 100 | 50 | **61.67** |

**TABLE 33. Total percentage scores in retelling (n=44)**

Having another comprehension measure—questions to check understanding—proved essential to the present research. So comprehension was double-checked, although comprehension questions proved to be more useful in establishing the learners' comprehension rates. The results of testing learners' comprehension through comprehension questions can be found in the following section.

### 6.5.2 Comprehension Questions

Open ended comprehension questions were used to check how much the learners understood from the two stories. Sixteen questions—eight to Text 1 and eight to Text 2—were prepared to test learners' understanding (see Sections 5.2.4 and 5.3.3). One correct

answer scored one point. The means and standard deviations for the subtests and the whole test are shown in Table 34.

| | MEANS | STANDARD DEVIATION |
|---|---|---|
| **SUBTEST 1 (TEXT 1 – n=8)** | 4 (50%) | 2 |
| **SUBTEST 2 (TEXT 2 – n=8)** | 4.4 (55%) | 1.68 |
| **WHOLE TEST (n=16)** | 8.09 (52.5%) | 3.24 |

**TABLE 34. Descriptive statistics (n – number of comprehension questions)**

| Learners | Total raw scores | Percentage (%) | Learners | Total raw scores | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **G19** | 16 | 100 | **D14** | 7 | 43.75 |
| **C4** | 15 | 93.75 | **F19** | 7 | 43.75 |
| **F3** | 15 | 93.75 | **G15** | 7 | 43.75 |
| **F10** | 15 | 93.75 | **D9** | 6 | 37.5 |
| **G13** | 14 | 87.5 | **E4** | 6 | 37.5 |
| **G14** | 14 | 87.5 | **F4** | 6 | 37.5 |
| **F2** | 13 | 81.25 | **F8** | 6 | 37.5 |
| **C10** | 12 | 75 | **D7** | 5 | 31.25 |
| **F7** | 12 | 75 | **E1** | 5 | 31.25 |
| **G9** | 12 | 75 | **E2** | 5 | 31.25 |
| **C6** | 11 | 68.75 | **E6** | 5 | 31.25 |
| **F1** | 11 | 68.75 | **E13** | 5 | 31.25 |
| **A16** | 10 | 62.5 | **B14** | 4 | 25 |
| **B9** | 10 | 62.5 | **C3** | 4 | 25 |
| **G5** | 10 | 62.5 | **E11** | 4 | 25 |
| **C5** | 9 | 56.25 | **F22** | 4 | 25 |
| **F14** | 9 | 56.25 | **C8** | 2 | 12.5 |
| **G10** | 9 | 56.25 | **C12** | 2 | 12.5 |
| **F15** | 8 | 50 | **E5** | 2 | 12.5 |
| **F17** | 8 | 50 | **C7** | 1 | 6.25 |
| **F18** | 8 | 50 | | | |
| **G2** | 8 | 50 | | | |
| **B1** | 7 | 43.75 | | | |
| **D4** | 7 | 43.75 | | | |

**TABLE 35. Comprehension scores (n=44, mean=47.25%, standard deviation=21.86)**

The means in Table 34 show that the learners did well at the comprehension questions test. From this derives that the retelling gives a distorted view of the learners' understanding because of the expectation that they should remember every event.

Table 35 shows the raw and percentage scores of individual learners.

The variability of learners' percentage scores is very wide as there is 93.75% difference between the pupil with the best score (100%) and the worst one (6.25%). A standard item analysis was needed to see what might have caused problems for the pupils in the test items.

This analysis was conducted to determine the facility values (F. V.) of the questions and their discrimination indices (D. I.). The former indicate the difficulty level of an item, the

latter show how well an item distinguishes among students at different levels of ability. The results of this analysis are shown in Table 36.

| | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q5 | Q6 | Q7 | Q8 | Q9 | Q10 | Q11 | Q12 | Q13 | Q14 | Q15 | Q16 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **F. V.** | .68 | .75 | .34 | .34 | .25 | .06 | .47 | .77 | .59 | .52 | .9 | .56 | .47 | .11 | .29 | .93 |
| **D. I.** | .6 | .66 | .73 | .66 | .6 | .2 | .93 | .66 | .93 | .73 | .26 | .66 | .86 | .26 | .6 | .2 |

**TABLE 36. Item analysis results (F. V. = facility value; D. I. = item discrimination index; Q 1-16 = number of comprehension questions)**

It is clear from Table 36 that roughly half of the questions—Questions 1, 2, 8, 9, 10, 12, and 13—were the ones that most learners could answer (facility values ranging from 52% to 77%). Questions 11 and 16 turned out to be extremely easy as more than 90% of the learners gave correct answers to them; therefore, they discriminated least between the learners (discrimination indices of .26 and .20). Questions 3, 4, 5, 6, 14, and 15 proved to be difficult, as the percentage of learners giving correct answers to these questions ranged between 6% and 34%.

What comes next is a brief analysis and discussion of the content of the comprehension questions to show what made them easy or difficult. The final English versions of the comprehension questions are provided in Appendices 14 and 15.

First of all, Questions 11 and 16 were very easy for all the learners as more than 90% of them were able to give correct answers to them. They asked about the characters of the second story about Harry Hippo—'Who did Harry live with?' and 'Who was happy at the end of the story?'. Other questions about the characters of the stories also proved to be easy—Questions 1, 2, 9, 10, 12. There was one exception in this tendency for the questions on characters to be easy: Question 5. The difficulty might have been caused by the word *hunter* because many learners simply did not understand its meaning and tried to deduce it from the context with more or less success, for example:

> The pigeon lived in a tree. He used to play with the water. He was very happy. But one day the woodcutter came and he wanted to cut the tree. The pigeon didn't let him do it. He didn't want his tree, his home to be cut out. Finally, the pigeon and the woodcutter became good friends. (Learner B1)

On the other hand, all the questions—3, 4, 6, 7, 14, and 15—asking about the events of the stories turned out to be difficult for the learners, except for one Question 13. This latter one inquiring about how his friends wanted to help Harry with his problem happened to be easy in terms of content as those who understood that Harry had a toothache, i.e. his tooth

hurt),could easily give a response to this question—partly based on their schemata of actions in case somebody has a toothache.

Both questions asking about the themes of the stories—friendship and helping each other—proved easy for the learners because most of them could give positive answers to these questions.

In sum, the analysis of the content of the comprehension questions showed that understanding and remembering events of the stories caused the greatest difficulties in learners' comprehension. It was less difficult for them to respond to questions on the characters of the stories, and the least difficult questions were those that asked about the main topics of the two texts.

It is possible to compare the schools where the participants of the miscue study came from to see if any of them is better than the others. This can be done through the examination of the mean scores on comprehension questions achieved by learners in different schools. Table 37 presents the means and standard deviation by schools. Only one learner was coded in School A therefore the mean is the actual score of that pupil and the standard deviation is 0. Because there was only one data registered in School A, it cannot characterize the group and therefore is not considered in the comparison below.

| Schools | Means | Standard Deviation |
|---|---|---|
| **A** | 10 | 0 |
| **B** | 7 | 2 |
| **C** | 7 | 4.75 |
| **D** | 6.25 | 0.75 |
| **E** | 4.57 | 0.89 |
| **F** | 9.38 | 2.93 |
| **G** | 11.25 | 2.75 |

**TABLE 37. Mean results (max. score = 16) of comprehension questions by schools**

Table 37 shows that learners in Schools F and G—two secondary schools in two towns of Transcarpathia—in general managed to understand the comprehension questions and answer them correctly (means 9.38 and 11.25). Pupils in Schools D—a town primary schools—and School E—a village primary school—scored lowest on the comprehension questions (means 6.25 and 4.57). The standard deviations in both schools indicate that the learners demonstrated a very equal and balanced performance on this comprehension measure. Although learners in School B—a town secondary school—and School C—a village primary school—had the same mean score (7), the deviation from this mean was larger in School C. In conclusion, learners in secondary schools scored better at the comprehension question test than those in primary schools.

## Chapter 7 Discussion and Interpretation of Results

This part of the thesis aims to discuss the findings described in the previous chapters. Nine different measures were used to search for answers to four research questions. These can be categorised into four groups:

1) interviews (retrospective interviews with twelve-year-old learners of EFL, interviews with teachers of English, interviews with three district educational managers or methodology consultants),

2) classroom observation,

3) curriculum analysis, and

4) analysis of learners' oral reading miscues (learners' general reading behaviour, miscue analysis of reading miscues by 44 learners, detailed analysis of miscues of six selected learners, checking learners' understanding of the texts they had read through retelling and comprehension questions).

The findings obtained through these tools were believed to provide answers to the research questions of the study (see Chapter 4). Research Question 1 asked about the role of reading aloud in English lessons in Transcarpathian Hungarian schools; Research Question 2 concerned the miscues learners made when reading aloud and the possible reasons for making them; Research Question 3 addressed the relationship between oral reading and comprehension, i.e. how much learners understood from the texts they had read; Research Question 4 investigated the teachers' reactions to learners' oral reading miscues and the strategies they applied in responding to these miscues. Table 38 summarises which research instrument contributed to answering which research question.

| **Research instruments** | **RQ1** | **RQ2** | **RQ3** | **RQ4** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Retrospective learner interviews | + | + | + | + |
| Teacher interviews | + | + | + | + |
| Educational manager interviews | + | - | - | - |
| Classroom observations | - | + | - | + |
| Curriculum analysis | + | - | - | - |
| Researcher's notes on learners' reading behaviour | - | - | + | - |
| Miscue analysis of reading miscues by 44 learners | - | + | + | - |
| Detailed analysis of miscues of six selected learners | - | + | + | - |
| Comprehension measures (retelling and comprehension questions) | - | - | + | - |

**TABLE 38. Contribution of research findings to answering the research questions (RQ)**

In this chapter, the findings will be discussed according to their relevance to the research questions. The findings will be examined from different aspects and the various viewpoints will be checked against each other.

**Research Question One**: Why do teachers use learner reading aloud in the classroom? What benefits do they expect from it?

To get an answer to this question, first the National Curriculum for Foreign Languages (1998) was examined in order to see the official requirements towards the use of oral reading in the FL classroom, set out by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine.

The National Curriculum (1998) says that both silent and oral types of reading should be used in Ukrainian schools during the process of FL teaching. It is claimed that the aim of silent reading is the learners' total comprehension of the texts they read. Such an aim is not specified for oral reading. However, the curriculum does indicate when these types of reading should be used by teachers. It requires that in the beginning stages of FL learning—in the old circumstances before the FL teaching reform in Ukraine, this meant Forms 5 and 6, learners aged 10-12—oral reading should be used extensively and silent reading should also be practised but much less often. At more advanced stages in the school—in Forms 7-11/12—the ratio of oral and silent reading use should be reversed. This means that the amount of oral reading should be decreased, while the amount of silent reading should be increased.

In Form 6, it is also a requirement that learners be able to identify the basic ideas of a text and be able to recognize relationships between facts and events. Unfortunately, the National Curriculum (1998) does not define exactly what is meant by 'basic ideas'. The term probably refers to the main message of a text, or the *theme* as Goodman and Burke (1973) put it.

The speed of Form 6 learners' oral reading is also determined by the National Curriculum (1998). At this age and stage of language learning, learners must be able to read 400 printed characters per minute.

Not all the teachers were familiar with the curricular requirements towards reading in English in general and reading aloud in particular. Most often teachers applied reading aloud because they firmly believed this was good for their learners in practising English pronunciation and intonation. They neglected the requirement of the National Curriculum (1998) that learners be able to recognise the essence—or 'basic ideas'—of texts without translation. The curriculum nowhere emphasises translation in relation to reading aloud. Some teachers were not even aware of the requirement that learners in Form 6 should be able to read 400 printed characters a minute.

When teachers were asked about the role of reading aloud in English lessons, one of the main reasons was practising proper English pronunciation and intonation. Teachers typically said that reading aloud meant a good opportunity for the learners to practise speaking in

English. It is obvious that teachers meant pronouncing words and phrases since speaking a language is not equal to reading it aloud.

Teachers also attached great importance to translation. Most considered that reading comprehension is impossible without translating every single word into the mother tongue of the learners. They saw the connection between reading aloud and translation in that when learners saw and heard a text at the same time they would be better able to translate a printed passage into their mother tongue, though they did not know of any empirical evidence to support their view.

Thus, in the teachers' opinion reading comprehension equals to learners' being able to translate texts. Moreover, one teacher admitted that learners concentrated on pronunciation rather than meaning when reading aloud.

There seems to be a discrepancy between what reading means in the academic literature—with the main focus on comprehension—and what reading is for these teachers—reading aloud mainly to practise good pronunciation.

Interviews with educational managers discussed the advantages of reading aloud for learners separately from its benefits for teachers.

The most important benefit of reading aloud for learners is the acquisition and practice of proper English pronunciation. One of the methodology consultants even implied by her answer that Hungarian learners of English are advantaged in this compared to Ukrainian or Russian children in Transcarpathia because Hungarian learners are already familiar with the Latin alphabet via their native language, whereas Russian or Ukrainian learners are not. Also, the consultants considered that those learners who can read well and correctly (including reading aloud), will be able to speak correctly in the target language and enrich their FL vocabulary immensely.

In addition, reading aloud was also believed to help children overcome the inhibitions or FL anxiety that they felt when they had to perform in the presence of their classmates and take the risk of making a mistake. On the other hand, reading aloud was thought by the educational managers to be advantageous for those extrovert learners who liked to perform in front of the others; reading aloud for them meant satisfying their need to perform and play roles.

According to educational managers, one of the most important benefits of reading aloud for teachers was that they could see how well their learners pronounced the FL and how well the learners knew some of its aspects, as well as what needed to be improved

It became obvious from the learner interviews that the great majority (81.8%) preferred oral reading to silent reading. Only 18.2% of the learners admitted they disliked oral reading. The most frequent reasons the children provided for liking oral reading were that they understood better what they read, could focus on meaning more easily, and could practise their pronunciation of English.

Among the negative attitudes to oral reading an interesting psychological pattern emerged. Learners who declared their dislike for reading aloud were mostly afraid of making mistakes when reading aloud, and as a consequence, being mocked and laughed at by other learners in the class. These anxious learners usually did not have excellent (10-12) or good (7-9) marks in English reading, but only had average marks (4-6) or sometimes even below the average. They said that the teachers did their best to stop learners' being mocked—for which learners seemed to be grateful—but there were times when this did not work and the teachers could not do anything about this. Therefore, these learners preferred silent reading because making a mistake in silent reading was no problem as nobody heard it, so it could not do any harm to the children.

Another psychological problem was the issue of low self esteem of some learners who felt ashamed and blamed themselves for not being able to read aloud in English. All these negative experiences—e.g. being laughed at when making a miscue—prevented the learners from becoming competent oral readers which further worsened the situation.

Several learners claimed they preferred silent reading not because of some negative factor such as being mocked, but when they read silently, they could focus more on meaning as they did not have to think about how to pronounce this or that word or phrase, i.e. pronouncing words did not distract their attention from meaning.

On the other hand, quite a few learners mentioned they liked oral reading because they could practise their pronunciation. Many learners associated pronunciation practice as one of the primary goals of oral reading in English lessons.

*Summary*

The National Curriculum for Foreign Languages (1998) demands the use of both oral and silent reading in Form 6, but in different amounts: oral reading is given more preference to, i.e. more time is devoted to its use. The results of the learner and teacher interviews proved that oral reading is applied extensively, while silent reading is hardly ever used by teachers.

Although the curriculum requires learners to be able to deduce the main message of texts, the form in which it should be done is not described or discussed. Therefore, teachers

use their own ways of getting learners comprehend a text. These techniques are the same in most schools: through translation, i.e. learners do not have to try to arrive at the meaning of different texts, but are given the mother tongue meanings of English words and they translate texts to understand them.

It is surprising to learn that most children like reading aloud. Their reasons for this include the opportunity to practise proper English pronunciation. Although the National Curriculum (1998) does not mention either translation or pronunciation in connection with reading aloud, learners, teachers, and educational managers all believe that reading aloud is beneficial for learners' ability to pronounce the FL.

On the other hand, those learners who do not prefer reading aloud are afraid of making mistakes and being laughed at. They often become inhibited and anxious. However, one of the methodology consultants believes just the opposite: reading aloud helps inhibited learners to overcome their anxiety, as most often other learners' attention is focused on the text and the textbook and not on the child who is reading. This contradicts the views of some learners as well as the points made by Helgesen and Gakuin (1993) (see Chapter 3).

Reading aloud is good for teachers because they can see how well their learners are able to pronounce the FL. Again, this reinforces the idea that reading aloud can only be used for practising proper target language pronunciation.

**Research Question Two**: What miscues do twelve-year-old Transcarpathian Hungarian learners of English make when reading aloud in the target language and what are the possible reasons for them?

To answer this research question, learners and teachers were interviewed about what reading miscues occur when learners read aloud and what the possible reasons for these miscues are. Classroom observations were conducted to check the answers obtained through interviews. However, the most convincing evidence was provided by the analysis of reading miscues that learners made when reading two selected texts out loud in the main study of the present thesis. Unlike several studies investigating the reading miscues of non-native English readers, for example, Tatlonghari, 1984; Rigg, 1988, this research proved that Transcarpathian Hungarian six-graders read differently from native-speaking children reading in English and make different miscues in terms of their quantity and order of frequency.

The most frequent miscue type in the main study was substitutions (1108=70.7%), whereas the least frequent type was reversal miscues (11=0.7%). The category of substitutions was subdivided into three groups—non-words, acceptable and non-acceptable substitutions.

Among these subgroups non-words were the most numerous (712=45.4%). The reasons for this may be manifold. First, it is possible that the learners were not familiar with many of the miscued words, resulting in misreading them out loud. Second, learners who recognised the words and knew their Hungarian meanings may either have been inattentive in pronouncing them and came up with a substitution that made no sense, or they were incapable of reading the words out loud due to a lack of practice.

The results of the miscue analysis proved that most learners knew the reading rules by Arakhin (1968), but were not able to use them in practice. This may be another reason why learners made so many substitution non-words.

Learners tended to omit short words and inflexions of words (61=3.89%). The literature explains that this phenomenon occurs when learners are aware of the context and meaning of texts they read. In such situations the miscues do not disturb them in comprehension. In the present study, learners very often did not even realize that they had omitted parts of the text, especially past simple endings of regular verbs. Nonetheless, these omissions did not hinder them in understanding.

It was interesting to see that one learner intentionally omitted words when reading aloud, both short and long words. When asked about this behaviour, she said it was because she did not recognise these words, did not understand them, and could not pronounce them, so she decided to omit them. This way her reading was fluent but her comprehension was poor. However, this was only one case from which no generalisations can be made.

Repetition miscues (73=4.65%) may be due to the learners' anxiety. However, another possible reason for repetitions is that the child wants to gain time to decode the later words in a line of print; therefore, s/he repeats what s/he has already decoded successfully or unsuccessfully.

Learners also committed stress miscues (67=4.27%) which always involved placing the greatest emphasis on the first syllable of words. This is the typical Hungarian stress pattern which is fixed, not flexible as in English. So the reason for these miscues was that when learners were not sure of the stress of a word, they followed the tendency of stressing syllables like they do in their mother tongue.

Intonation miscues made by learners were quite numerous (115=7.33%). Learners' misintonation usually involved using the Hungarian intonation pattern of interrogative sentences in English questions. Because this miscue was observed in all the schools, it might be true that learners at the age of twelve studying English for the second year have not yet

acquired proper English intonation; therefore, they apply the patterns familiar from their native language.

The interviews revealed that both the teachers and the learners were aware of and most concerned about one type of reading miscues: substitutions of non-words which in certain cases can also be considered mispronunciations of words. Although learners knew the theory about open and closed syllables and the syllables containing the letter R, they were not able to use their theoretical knowledge in practice. One teacher thought this was because learners had no time to think about and remember the different syllable types when reading aloud.

Altogether 251 miscues were identified during classroom observation sessions. In the English lessons observed, as well as in the miscue study itself, the most frequent miscues were substitutions (129=51.39%), followed by hesitation miscues (34=13.54%), corrections (24=9.56%), omissions (22=8.76%), intonation miscues (20=7.96%), and reversals (12= 4.78%). The least frequent miscue type was that of insertions (10 – 3.98%).

It is surprising that hesitation miscues were second in the order of frequency. Learners usually hesitated when they were not sure how to pronounce this or that word, be it familiar or unfamiliar to them. Corrections, omissions, and intonation miscues were found in almost equal number, although the reasons for making them varied. Corrections were most probably made because learners felt there was something wrong with their reading, so they returned to the problematic places in the text and tried to correct the miscues. Whether they managed or failed to correct the problems and produce the Expected Responses all the time did not seem to matter much for them. Omission miscues occurred by chance or were made on purpose, as one of the learners admitted in the interview. Intonation miscues in the classrooms observed were similar to those in the main miscue study. They most often resembled the intonation patterns used in the learners' mother tongue.

Reversal and insertion miscues were not numerous in the classrooms observed. Very often learners did not notice these miscues. Most often insertions were words that occurred in the text later in the same line, which suggests that learners were inspecting and decoding the words in the lines faster than they could pronounce words.

*Summary*

The research findings proved that substitutions were the most frequent miscues that learners made when reading aloud in English. This is supported by the results of all the research tools—learner and teacher interviews, classroom observations, and miscue analysis.

The main reasons for learners' substitution miscues were that they were not familiar with the miscued words, or if they were then they did not pay enough attention to pronouncing the text correctly, i.e. they aimed for fluency rather than accuracy. However, this is contrary to what the majority of the learners said in the interviews where they claimed that when reading aloud, they paid more attention to and focused more on accuracy than fluency or meaning.

Also, learners often made intonation and stress miscues, as well as omitting, inserting, correcting, reversing, or repeating words. Various factors may be responsible for these miscues. Most often learners do not even notice they have made miscues and in such cases the reason is mere lack of attention on the learners' part. This is usually the case in reversal, omission, and insertion miscues. Learners are always aware of corrections, feeling that they produced an Observed Response that must be corrected. Sometimes they manage to get the corrections right, sometimes they do not. However, the final result does not really matter for the learners: they are content with their behaviour of at least trying their best to correct the problems.

**Research Question Three**: How much do learners understand from what they have read out loud?

To answer this question, data were collected through a number of instruments: learner and teacher interviews, researcher's notes on learners' reading behaviour, miscue analysis, and two comprehension tests, and learners' retelling and comprehension questions.

When learners were asked how much they understood from a text they read out loud, almost everybody claimed that they could not focus on meaning, but rather they were concerned with being able to pronounce everything correctly and not to make mistakes. Moreover, learners were surprised at this question because when they read aloud, they were not expected to understand the text they read. They were asked to translate passages from their textbooks, but at such times learners looked through the text silently and quickly, and only then did they start the translation. This means that it was no problem if learners did not understand from the context what they had read, it was more important to be able to translate texts. These translations were done with the help of English-Hungarian vocabulary lists containing the unknown words of a text to be read; these lists were always provided by the teacher.

Learners believed that pronunciation was the most important thing in reading, and they had to read aloud to develop a good pronunciation. For those learners who preferred silent

reading to reading aloud, this whole issue of pronouncing everything correctly constituted a ‘burden’.

Because of this high degree of attention to or awareness of accuracy in reading aloud, very few of the learners used one or more of the cueing systems mentioned by Goodman (1969) when decoding the message of the print (see Chapter 3). However, some learners used semantic cues and others used graphical ones to arrive at meaning.

Teachers were of diverse opinions about the relationship of reading aloud and reading comprehension. These views can be placed on a continuum at one end of which is the claim that reading aloud does not help understanding at all because learners do not concentrate on the meaning of a text when they read aloud, but on how to pronounce the words and phrases correctly. At the other end of the continuum is the belief that only reading aloud helps learners understand a text—they explained this by the assertion that when learners read silently, they were ‘day-dreaming’ instead of concentrating on the meaning of a text, therefore they did not comprehend anything.

In the middle of this continuum were the answers of those teachers who stated that reading aloud did not help much, and anyway, everything was translated for the learners. Yet other teachers claimed that full comprehension is impossible without a mixture of silent reading and oral reading.

From the above discussion it seems that teachers’ activities in the classroom are based on firm beliefs. Neither the learner interviews, nor the ones with teachers provided clear evidence of how much learners understand from what they read out loud. Therefore it was hoped that the results of the miscue analysis and, most importantly, comprehension tests, would answer Research Question Three more convincingly.

Subjective fieldnotes, referred to in the thesis as researcher’s notes, were taken after learners performed the oral reading task in the main miscue study. Some references can be found there to how much learners understood from the two texts. In twelve cases the notes said it was evident that learners did not comprehend the texts. In four other cases the notes mentioned clear evidence of comprehension. These statements were made on the bases of the learners’ reading behaviour. However subjective these judgements were, they cannot be disregarded because they indicate that in many instances learners did not seem to understand too much of the meanings of the two texts.

In the analysis of miscues, the value of MPHW—miscues per hundred words—was calculated for the texts. It turned out to be ca. 7, i.e., about seven miscues in one hundred words. To put it differently, 93% of the texts was read by the learners without any miscues.

This suggests that learners were concerned with accuracy. But again this result did not tell us whether learners understood little or much of what they read.

Two comprehension tests were used to check the learners' understanding. Both were suggested by Goodman and Burke (1973) as elements of miscue analysis. First, learners were requested to retell the plot of the texts. The mean retelling score was 41%. Twenty-one learners (47.7%) achieved this mean or above, and twenty-three learners (52.3%) were below the mean score. This indicates that more than half of the learners did not understand much of the texts.

In the retelling, learners scored one point for every event, character, and theme or main idea that they mentioned in connection to a text. This is a cognitively demanding test as it expects readers to recall events, characters and themes. Much depends on how developed the learners' cognitive skills and memory are. For this reason, and to provide more equal opportunities to every learner, comprehension questions were devised to test understanding.

The mean comprehension score was 47.25%, somewhat higher than the mean retelling score, indicating that on average learners performed better at this test than on retelling. An equal number of learners scored above (22=0%) and below (22=50%) this score (standard deviation=21.86). Out of the twenty-two learners, eight scored really low (range of comprehension: 6.25 – 25%). Questions about story characters proved to be easy, as well as questions about themes. As in the retelling, questions about story events turned out to be the most difficult. However, several learners referred to the use of semantic cues and their own schemata in deducing the meaning of the texts (e.g. actions in case someone's tooth hurts). Finally, the results of the comprehension test suggest that learners achieved a balanced score and on the whole, did quite well.

*Summary*

The interview data did not reveal any reliable evidence about learners' comprehension. What they did call attention to was that in Transcarpathian Hungarian schools learners rely on translation when they want to comprehend what they read, rather than relying on the three cueing systems available to native readers (see Chapter III). Very rarely do Transcarpathian Hungarian children use these systems to decode the messages of print.

Evidence obtained from comprehension questions showed that despite the negative features and influences of reading aloud, half the learners did quite well at the comprehension test.

**Research Question Four**: How are learners' reading miscues treated by teachers? What strategies do teachers apply in responding to these miscues?

The academic literature—c.f. Campbell, 1995—speaks about five different strategies that teachers can apply in dealing with reading miscues (see Chapter 3.7). In the present study four of these strategies were found—non-response, immediate and delayed corrections, and providing the word. Word-cueing was never used by teachers in the twenty-one observed lessons. To some extent, delayed response and providing the word are similar strategies, because in the latter teachers also delay their response, the difference being that they do not wait till reading aloud is finished. The strategy of providing the word is often applied by teachers when responding to hesitation miscues.

Learner and teacher interviews both asked the respondents about the nature of teacher reactions to learner miscues, as well as teacher strategies used in responding to miscues. The answers were checked with the help of lesson observation.

More than half of the learners claimed that teachers responded immediately to a miscue when they heard it (24 learners =54.5%). The remaining children said that their teachers applied delayed correction (20 learners =45.5%). This was supported by the findings of the teacher interviews as four teachers (57.1%) acknowledged that they immediately stopped the child reading aloud and corrected the miscues, while three teachers (42.9%) used delayed response to miscues, which meant that they did not interrupt the learners' reading aloud, but took notes of the miscues instead. When the child finished his/her portion of reading aloud, teachers enumerated the miscues they had taken notes of, corrected them, and asked every learner in the class to repeat the corrections. The latter strategy seems to be more sensible, not because learners learn much from such corrections, but at least teachers do not interrupt learners in the flow of reading aloud and do not make them feel 'miserable'.

Pupils gave a quite detailed report on teachers' actions when a reading miscue occurred in the classroom. These actions ranged from asking the learner who made the miscue to repeat the corrected word once to instructing the pupils to write down the miscued word into their vocabulary notebooks. Sometimes teachers asked other learners to indicate the miscues. Learners thought that in this way teachers checked if everyone was attending to the reading aloud. This might have been very stressful for learners as they could not predict exactly who the teacher would call upon next. On the other hand, it might be embarrassing, shameful, and image-destroying for the child who made a miscue to be corrected by his/her peer.

Two other ways of responding to miscues emerged during classroom observations, one of which was in effect neglecting miscues, labelled non-response; the other strategy was to

provide the words, usually when hesitation miscues were made by learners. The ratio of immediate and delayed correction mentioned by the learners (54.5% vs. 45.5%) and by the teachers (57.1% vs. 42.9%) was reformulated by these third and fourth possibilities because 45%—less than mentioned either by the teachers or the learners—of the 251 miscues during the observations were responded to immediately by the teachers, 30.3% of the miscues were given delayed correction, teachers provided the problematic words for the learners in 13.5% of the miscues, while 11.2% of them were not responded to at all. In most cases it was the omission miscues that were overlooked by the teachers. On the other hand, intonation miscues and substitution non-words were always corrected by the teachers and they asked the learners to repeat the corrected variants.

Evidently, teachers did not pay much attention to whether learners understood the problems or miscues or not. They either asked for repetition or they did not, but very often the learners repeated the corrected words even if they were not asked to do so. Learners were accustomed to having to repeat the corrected miscue once, so they did it and that was all: reading aloud continued as if nothing had happened. This teacher behaviour seems to show a lack of concern for the progress of their learners.

Learners admitted that they could not learn the corrected miscues immediately—neither in the case of immediate, nor in the case of delayed corrections. They said they could remember the correct versions only after they heard them again in the following three or four lessons. Teachers were of the same opinion and considered that learners needed time and opportunity to practise learning and remembering the corrected miscues. It would appear that interrupting a child's oral reading to correct a miscue and asking them to repeat the correction is not an effective technique because it can lead to success only in the long run, if ever.

*Summary*

Teachers used four different strategies to respond to learners' miscues. Most frequently teachers decided on immediate or delayed corrections, when they had to react to substituted non-words or intonation miscues as the two most frequent types in the lesson observations. In addition, they used two other strategies, one of which was non-response, i.e. teachers completely ignored the miscues—most often omission miscues were not paid attention to by the teachers—while the other strategy was connected to providing the word for the learners. Such a strategy was only found when teachers reacted to learners' hesitation miscues.

Although learners were asked to repeat the correction of a miscued word either individually, or in chorus, both learners and teachers admitted that learners learned very few

of the corrected words. This was also observed in the lessons because most of the time teacher corrections were repeated by the learners once, but were not consolidated in any way. So when the same learner or another one came across a word that had been previously corrected by the teacher, the learners made the same miscues as before. This suggests that teacher correction seems ineffective in the classroom and can be considered to be wasting valuable class time. Certainly, it does not mean that teachers are never to correct, but implies that the mode of corrections by them should be reconsidered.

In the part that follows, the six hypotheses that led the research are discussed in relation to the research findings. The hypotheses are listed in Chapter 4.

In fact, some of the hypotheses were supported by the research findings and others refuted, or just partly supported or refuted.

The first hypothesis addressed the belief of English teachers in Transcarpathian Hungarian schools about the use of reading aloud that it helped learners improve their pronunciation. This hypothesis was supported by the research findings because data obtained from learner, teacher, and educational manager interviews suggested that reading aloud in the classroom was believed to help improve learners' pronunciation. This was one of the main goals of teachers with the application of this reading technique.

The second hypothesis concerned the way teachers treated a reading miscue made by a learner in the classroom. It was hypothesized that teachers interrupted their learners whenever they heard a miscue in the children's reading and corrected this miscue immediately. This hypothesis was only partially supported by research data through interviews and classroom observations data. Interview results showed that teachers either interrupted learners when they made reading miscues and corrected the miscues at once, or they took notes of the miscues, waited till learners finished their part in reading aloud, and corrected only then. This is called delayed response to reading miscues. Classroom observations also showed that sometimes teachers did not respond to reading miscues by learners at all, or they provided the words for the learners when the latter hesitated to read a word or a phrase. Thus although the research showed that Hypothesis Two was supported, three other ways of teacher response to learner miscues also emerged.

Hypothesis Three was connected to the types of miscues learners made, suggesting that most often learners made substitution miscues. This hypothesis was fully supported by research findings of both the miscue analysis and classroom observations. Learners' most

miscues were substitution miscues when reading aloud in English—at the micro level / in the miscue study: 70.7%; at the macro level / classroom observations: 51.39%.

The fourth hypothesis concerned the connection between reading aloud and comprehension. It was supposed that learners did not understand what they had read aloud because during the process of reading aloud they could not focus on the meanings of texts. What they did focus on was proper and accurate pronunciation of words.

The research findings showed diverse aspects of this issue. Some learners claimed that they could not focus on the meaning, but rather they concentrated on making efforts to produce accurate pronunciation. Also, some teachers made the same claim. So in these cases the hypothesis was supported. Other learners and other teachers, and educational managers stated that learners could only understand a text if they read it out loud. So this perception refuted the hypothesis.

More reliable data were provided by comprehension tests, especially comprehension questions based on the two texts that learners had read out loud. This measure proved that half of the population achieved the mean score or above it in the test. This finding seems to refute the hypothesis that learners understand little of what they read aloud, because this is only partly true for one half of the population.

Hypothesis Five supposed the learners did not use the three cueing systems (grapho-phonemic, syntactic, and semantic) when decoding the meanings of texts. Instead, they would rely greatly on translation. One part of this hypothesis was fully supported by the research findings because learner and teacher interviews, as well as classroom observations indicated that learners translated the texts they had read to understand their meaning. On the other hand, results of the retelling test suggested that several learners used graphical and semantic cues to decode the meaning of print, though instances when learners used syntactic cues were not found. This implies that the fifth hypothesis was only partially supported by the findings.

The last hypothesis supposed that learners did not like reading aloud at all, and they felt this type of activity was forced on them. In fact, the results of learner and teacher interviews, as well as classroom observations showed the opposite for the majority of the learners, i.e. they did like to read aloud in English (81.8%) and did not feel that this activity was a burden for them. They were accustomed to it and could not even imagine not reading aloud in the classroom. On the other hand, there were some inhibited learners (18.2%) who did not like reading aloud because they were afraid of making miscues and being laughed at by their peers for making these miscues. For these learners reading aloud was a real burden. The finding that the majority of learners liked reading aloud refuted the hypothesis.

To sum up, two of the hypotheses (1, 3) were fully supported, three were partially supported (2, 4, 5) in the sense that additional issues emerged, too. One hypothesis (6) was refuted by the results. These findings suggest certain pedagogical implications and implications for further research that are presented in the following chapter.

# Chapter 8 Conclusions, Suggestions for Reading Instruction and Research, and Limitations of the Study

The previous chapter discussed all the research findings in relation to the four research questions. Crucial implications arose from these discussions. This chapter presents the implications both for teaching reading in English to children in Transcarpathian Hungarian schools and for reading research in this particular context. The chapter ends with revealing some limitations of the research detailed in the thesis.

## Reading Aloud and Silent Reading

Many learners stated they liked reading aloud because it helped them in understanding a text. Although this claim was not supported by the research findings, learners seemed to have believed what was told them, i.e. reading aloud was useful for them. But teachers should not let learners be misled by the belief that reading is for acquiring good pronunciation.

Learners made a lot of insertions during reading aloud. These were words that occurred later in the same line of a text. It means that learners inspected and decoded words faster than they could pronounce them. This is a clear proof that reading aloud slows down the reading process. If learners read silently, teachers could save valuable classroom time for other activities in the lessons.

Teachers claimed that they used reading aloud to help inhibited learners overcome their inhibitions. But in fact, these learners were inhibited because they had to read aloud in the presence of other learners and take the risk of making a miscue and being laughed at because of this by the other learners. These learners liked to read silently better than orally because for them silent reading was a way of 'self-protection'. Such learners should never be forced to read aloud. Teachers should reevaluate certain learners' attitudes to reading aloud and try to understand that the source of the problem of inhibition is reading aloud itself. When teachers have understood the real relationship between learners' inhibition and reading aloud, they should no longer insist on such learners' oral reading. Rather, teachers should map their learners in terms of learning styles and preferences, and develop teaching methods that would meet the needs of individual learners.

Another problem when reading aloud was that learners knew a lot of reading rules and in theory they were well prepared for reading because they were able to enumerate and explain the various types of syllables. However, when it came to the practical application of the rules, learners were incapable of recognizing the vowel-consonant-vowel pattern in some words, e.g. *ache*, though children knew in theory that "a syllable ending in a vowel is an open

one and the vowel in it should be read as in the alphabet" (extract from a retrospective learner interview). In addition, learners do not seem to know certain exceptions from the rule—e.g. *put* is not equivalent to *but*. Therefore, once they insist on the knowledge of rules so much, the task of teachers is to teach learners to use the rules, i.e. their theoretical knowledge, in practice more effectively, for example through word recognition tasks and exercises.

**The Relationship of Reading Aloud and Comprehension**

Teacher interviews showed various views and false and naïve beliefs concerning the relationship between reading aloud and comprehension. Only half of the learners did well at the comprehension test, i.e. understood the essence of the text they had read. This result is not acceptable and teachers should do everything possible to teach learners how to try to comprehend more and how to be effective in decoding the writer's message.

In the interviews, some teachers considered that to understand a text fully, reading aloud alone is not enough. Learners have to read it silently, too. So if only silent reading really helps comprehension, then why should teachers and learners bother about reading aloud and do it all the time with little sense?

The value of MPHW was relatively low in the main study (7.4). It implies that about 93% of the texts was read out loud by the learners without mistakes. This percentage refers to a high degree of accuracy on the learners' part. However, the results showed that accuracy does not necessarily mean comprehension. So teachers should not expect learners to be extremely accurate when reading aloud. Instead, they should make learners aware of the chief goal of reading which is comprehension.

**Retelling as a comprehension measure**

The study proved that retelling as a measure to test reading comprehension is not valid, because it tests learners' memory rather than their comprehension. Furthermore, it is a big strain on learners to remember details of a story. So teachers had better use comprehension questions to check how well learners understood texts.

However, retelling is the second question at the school-leaving examination in English in Forms 9 and 11, where the learners' task is to read, translate and retell a text (Kovalenko & Kudina, 2005). If the purpose of the second question in the exams is, in fact, checking how well learners comprehend the message of a text, then it would be worth while considering changing the retelling task to reading comprehension questions.

In any case, classroom observations suggested that teachers did not frequently expect learners to retell the plot of stories—and thus teachers did not seem to make much effort to prepare learners for the final exam in English. Rather, they had learners translate texts to check their comprehension, despite the fact that translation is not tested as a separate item in the final exam.

**Translation**

When learners had to understand the meaning of a text, they most often relied on translation done by either the teacher or the learners. This heavy reliance on translation means that teachers thought it an obligation for learners to know the exact Hungarian equivalents of all the English words that learners came across in different texts. Even if learners showed a general understanding of the messages of printed texts, teachers did not seem to be satisfied. Therefore, they made learners translate every single word in a text—this is supported by the observation results. This would lead to the learners' need always to translate everything they read instead of trying to infer meaning. This prevents learners from guessing meaning, thus hindering them in becoming competent language users. Teachers should avoid the translation of every word. Rather, they should teach learners about the three cuing systems, and how to deduce meaning from print with the help of these systems.

Only a very small number of learners claimed they used graphical and semantic cues to comprehend the message of texts. For learners to be more effective in reading comprehension, teachers should teach them various methods of deducing meaning from print without using bilingual dictionaries or translating. This could be done through familiarizing learners with the three cuing systems—grapho-phonic, syntactic, and semantic. Using these systems more extensively may further add to learners' reading comprehension, which is the main goal of reading.

**Pronunciation, stress, and intonation**

When teachers and learners claimed that the aim of oral reading was to practise proper pronunciation, they actually meant producing proper English sounds that were different from the sounds of their own language. But pronunciation also involves stress and intonation. However, the researcher's notes indicated that learners' intonation was flawed, whereas classroom observations proved that stress and intonation were not taught at all—at least, no trace of teaching them was found in the twenty-one observed lessons. Competent oral reading in normal speed was neither emphasised nor encouraged or taught by teachers.

When learners did not know which syllable of a polysyllabic word to stress, they decided on the first one. This is the syllable that is always stressed in Hungarian, the learners' mother tongue. This implies that teachers should raise learners' awareness of the differences between English and Hungarian stress. Teachers should provide exercises in which learners practise various word stress patterns—e.g. using the traditional large circle for a stressed syllable, and a small one for an unstressed syllable.

The situation is similar with intonation. Learners' intonation miscues were mainly those in which they used the tone of Hungarian yes-no questions. Teachers claimed that the aim of reading aloud was to teach learners to pronounce words and phrases correctly. But intonation is closely connected to pronunciation. So teachers must pay more attention to teaching it and developing learners' intonation skills.

**Teachers' reactions to miscues**

Teachers's corrections of miscues were ineffective because learners could not remember the corrected variants, only in the long run, if they were attentive enough and these variants were repeated several times. Therefore, other strategies should be applied by teachers, for example, teachers should collect the most frequently occurring miscues and on their basis devise some extra activities for the learners in which they would have more opportunities to practise the words and learn them more easily.

In the English lessons analysed in the study, teachers sometimes ignored learners' miscues. This non-response to miscues is only acceptable if, after noticing the miscue, teachers decide on the spot that it does not hinder the learners in comprehension.

Teachers should understand that miscues are a natural part of the learning process and they can only be eliminated through rational activities of both learners and teachers.

**Teachers' habits of calling on learners**

Although this seems to be a minor finding of the lesson observations, it might have important implications. The observations showed that teachers most often called on those learners who raised their hands to indicate their willingness and readiness to read aloud. However, it was evident that only those learners raised their hands who were in no way inhibited and liked to read aloud. The task of the teachers should be to involve everybody into the work in the lesson, e.g. with the help of individual tasks. Because every child has to be taught, it is not acceptable for teachers to deal with only those learners who raise their hands

as an indication of their willingness to perform, especially when it is always the same learners who volunteer.

**The use of miscue analysis**

Miscue analysis as a research tool (see Section 3.4) is an analytical method with the help of which researchers and teachers are able to explain why learners make miscues when reading aloud. It shows to the teacher-researcher how learners try to comprehend the information they get from print. When doing so, native readers apply three cuing systems that are useful in understanding. Very rarely do non-native Transcarpathian Hungarian sixth-graders apply these systems. Through miscue analysis teachers and researchers can analyse the miscues learners make and identify which cuing system causes the greatest difficulty to certain learners. This knowledge can help teachers to devise new exercises for learners to help them become better readers.

Miscue analysis in its original form is complicated and time-consuming to perform. However, a shortened and revised form of the miscue categories like the one presented in this study can be applied by researchers and teachers easily.

**Suggestions for further research**

The contribution of the study described in the thesis is manifold. First, it provided new insights into reading miscues by non-native learners in a minority context who have not been investigated before. Also, the study indicates new routes in reading research.

The first direction might be a comparative analysis of these learners' reading in Hungarian as their first language and reading in English as their foreign language through miscue analysis. This research would answer the question whether there is a qualitative and quantitative difference between the miscues in these languages, and what difference there is between the processes of reading in Hungarian and reading in English in general.

The second direction that the study suggested concerns the interrelation of three languages—Hungarian, English, and Ukrainian—and the impact they have on each other. This research would seek to answer the question whether the knowledge of Ukrainian as a second language influences learners' English reading miscues. When examining this impact, it would be best to conduct this research with bilingual—Hungarian and Ukrainian—children in settlements of Transcarpathia where the Hungarians do not live in a block but have close contacts with Ukrainians, for example, in the Upper-Tisza territory (see Appendix 1).

In addition, an investigation could be designed to examine which strategies learners use —besides translating, if any—to arrive at the meaning of texts.

A similar study could be conducted with the same learners in Form 9 or Form 11 to see progress or change in their reading.

The final implication for further research comes from the fact that only half of the learners did well at the comprehension questions test. Based on this, a new research question can be formulated which was not the focus of this study: Would more than 50% of learners achieve better comprehension test results if they read texts silently?

**Limitations of the study**

Finally, I am aware of the limitations of my study. Although the schools for the study were selected with care, the findings cannot be generalized for the whole Hungarian population of Transcarpathia because many Transcarpathian Hungarians live in areas where the influence of Ukrainian is very high—these are the scattered groups of Hungarians living in the highland territories around Tyachiv and Rakhiv (Orosz & Csernicsko, 1999). If learners from these areas had been included in the study, the research might have demonstrated different results.

Other aspects of the research methodology had limitations; for example, only two types of texts were applied in the miscue study—narrative and dialogic. Whether other types of texts would show similar results is a question for further investigation. Another limit of the study concerns the control for teachers' competence. This variable was not and could not be verified other than through my own knowledge of the teachers and observing them teach prior to the miscue study.

There are inherent limitations in how validly and reliably the research instruments measured what they were meant to check. In addition, more English lessons could have been observed in the schools involved. More observations might have contributed to even deeper understanding of the macro level of miscues.

Finally, one research session with one learner turned out to be too long for a twelve-year-old child—reading two texts, retelling their plot, answering comprehension questions, and responding to interview questions. If I were to redo this research, I would not have learners perform so many tasks in one sitting. This amount of time might also have caused the learners to make reading miscues. Nevertheless, I believe that the results of this research are relevant to the teaching of reading in Transcarpathia, and of interest to those who research reading in a foreign language.

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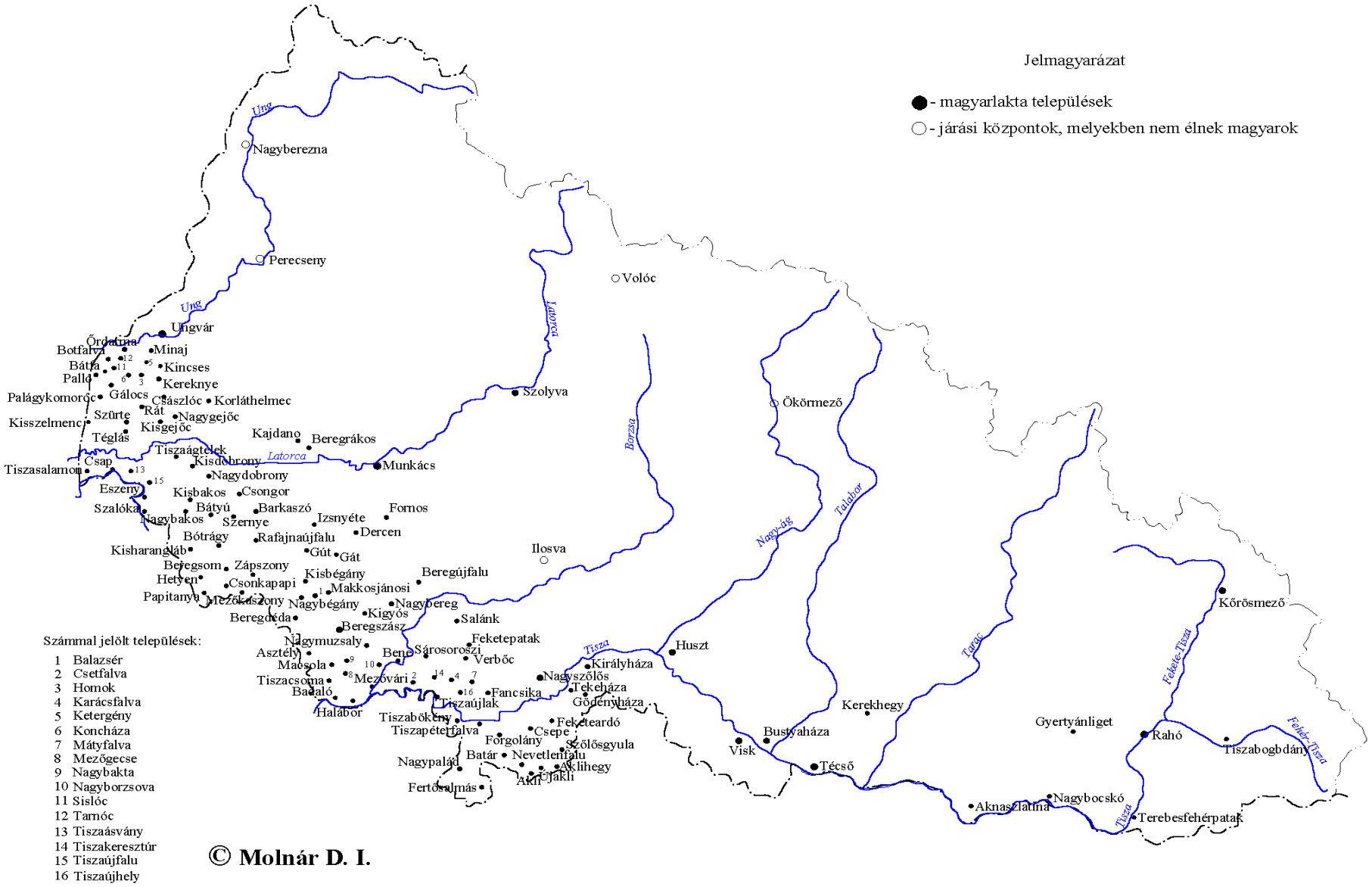
# APPENDICES

# APPENDIX 1 Transcarpathia with settlements where Hungarians live

Explanation of signs: ● – settlements with Hungarian inhabitants
○ – district centres with no Hungarian inhabitants



## APPENDIX 2

**Rules for reading stressed vowels: The four syllable types and the way stressed vowels should be read in them**

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a | [ ] bag | [ ] page | [ ] park | [ ] care |
| o | [ ] box | [ ] stone | [ ] port | [ ] more |
| u | [ ] run | [ ] tube | [ ] fur | [ ] sure |
| e | [ ] bed | [ ] Pete | [ ] her | [ ] here |
| i, y | [ ] big, myth | [ ] nine, type | [ ] girl | [ ] tire, tyre |

**APPENDIX 3**

**Reading task: Extract from the English textbook for Form 6**

**(Plakhotnyk & Martynova, 1996)**

Exercise 28, page 46.

Read the text and answer the questions about your friend and his family.

I have a friend. His name is Pavlo. He is 11. He is a pupil of the sixth form. Pavlo lives in town. He has a father, a mother, a sister and a brother. His father Oleh Stepanovych is an engineer. He works at the plant. His mother Maryna Petrivna is a doctor. She works at the hospital. Maryna Petrivna is a nice and kind woman.

Pavlo's sister Oksana is a little girl. She is 5. She goes to a kindergarten. Pavlo's brother Viktor is 19. He is a student at the institute. Viktor is a good student.

Pavlo has a grandmother and a grandfather too. they live in a beautiful village. They are not old. Pavlo's grandfather is a builder. He works at a factory. His grandmother is a milkmaid. She works on a cattle-farm. Pavlo's family is big and good.

1. Have you a friend? 2. What's his name? 3. How old is he? 4. What form is he in? 5. Does your friend live in town or in a village? 6. What is your friend's father? 7. Where does he work? 8. What does he look like? 9. What is your friend's mother? 10. Where does she work? 11. What does she look like? 12. Has your friend a sister or a brother? 13. What is your friend's sister / brother? 14. How old is he / she? 15. What does he / she look like? 16. Is your friend's family good?

**APPENDIX 4**

**The Goodman Taxonomy of Reading Miscues**

The Goodman Taxonomy of Reading Miscues is applied in miscue analysis research trying to explain the various reasons why native readers make miscues—any departures from the written text—when reading aloud. Goodman (1979) prefers to use the term 'miscue' and avoid 'error', implying by this that not all kinds of departure from the written text are erroneous. The taxonomy was developed to assess the different strategies that native English children use while reading.

## 1 General Requirements and Procedures

Goodman and Burke (1973) describe the conditions required for carrying out miscue analysis research. For example, they claim that

the Taxonomy can be utilised in investigations on “small groups of readers who have been selected on the basis of shared characteristics” (Goodman & Burke, 1973, p. 1). These features include I.Q. scores, age of the readers, race, the readers’ cognitive style, reading comprehension, reading achievement, common dialect, etc.

Concerning the selection of reading materials for analysis, four main criteria have been singled out. First, it is of utmost importance that the reader be completely unfamiliar with the material he has been asked to read out loud; second, it must be complicated enough for the reader in order to produce miscues; third, the material must be long enough to provide syntactic and semantic

context to the reader; finally, the selected text must constitute a semantically complete unit (Goodman & Burke, 1973). The authors give an explanation for their criteria, saying that it is good if the selected text is new for the reader, i.e. the reader is not familiar with it, because in this way the researcher can make sure that the reader is actually reading, and not reproducing the text from his memory. As for the passage selected to be read out loud during the research, Goodman & Burke claim the importance of the text's sufficient difficulty. They even point out that "a minimum of approximately fifty miscues generated during a twenty-minute reading session can be used as a guideline" (p. 2). If the researcher obtains too few miscues, he will not have adequate

evidence of how the reader applies his strategies when reading. This is closely connected with the third criterion emphasised before, namely, that it is the existence and presence of a syntactically and semantically extended and developed context that the full use of a reader's strategies depends on.

Both story and informational format materials are possible to use to gather miscues as data in the miscue analysis research. Informational format materials are those taken from social studies, history, geography, etc. Besides the four selection criteria justified above, Goodman & Burke (1973) draw the researcher's attention to the factors that one should consider when selecting materials for such research. These include "the development

of theme and plot, the clarity and the complexity of the concepts involved, the language and the experiential background of the research subject" (p. 3). Having considered all the factors, the authors come to the conclusion that "a text should contain a minimum of approximately 500 words" (p. 3). They also believe that for the native primary school reader the average length of reading time is approximately 20 minutes, while an adequate amount of time is in the region of forty minutes for native secondary school and adult readers.

Concerning the physical arrangements necessary for such research, these are minimal. The researcher should create an audio recording of the total reading session in order

to later have a permanent record. Thus the obtained data can be made retrievable. It will be replayed while an official worksheet copy of the text read out loud by the reader is being prepared.

Goodman & Burke (1973) emphasize that "the reading should be uninterrupted and free of major background disturbances" (p. 4) so that the recording be clear. For this purpose, the researcher should carefully decide on the time and place for taping. The subject of the research is asked to read from the printed version of the selected text, while the researcher is following it on a separate worksheet copy and noting the miscues as they occur. In this copy, the length of the lines, the original spelling and punctuation are retained,

while there is enough space between the lines for the researcher to note down all the miscues that occur.

In carrying out miscue analysis research with native readers, the last phase is to ask the subjects to retell what they have read, the aim of which is “to gain the reader’s unprompted view of the material” (p. 5). In case the retelling stops, the researcher should guide the subjects. For this reason, he or she should possess an outline of the text the subject has read aloud. Goodman & Burke (1973) suggest that outlines for story material should contain character analysis, events, plot, and theme, whereas outlines for informational material should include specifics, generalisations, and major concepts. The subjects’ retelling of the

text should also be recorded. The researcher should have a content outline at his disposal with one hundred points being distributed across the items within each of the categories of the outline. The researcher's task is to compare the reader's retelling to the outline and deduct points from the total of one hundred for missing or confused information.

| | |
|---|---|
| Character recall (list characters) | 15 |
| Character development (modifying statements) | 15 |
| Theme | 20 |
| Plot | 20 |
| Events (list occurrences) | 30 |

**Table 1 Story outline scores (Goodman & Burke, 1973)**

## 2 Initial and Official Worksheet Copies in Miscue Analysis

While the reader is reading the selected text out loud, the researcher is marking all the

miscues that occurred on a worksheet copy. This, of course, will be incomplete because it is physically impossible for the researcher to note down every miscue—factors such as reading speed, interruptions, and the occurrence of multiple miscue sequences play an influential role in this. Nevertheless, it has a crucial advantage, namely that

> because the marking is made during the actual reading, it tends to more accurately record miscues which involve minor phonemic variations and / or portions of the reading which are difficult to hear on the audio tape. (Goodman & Burke, 1973, p. 6)

The official worksheet copy is composed with the help of the audio tape and the initial

worksheet copy. Goodman & Burke (1973) offer a four-step procedure for developing an official worksheet copy. They suggest that, first, two researchers listen to the recording separately, and try to come up with individual worksheet copies. Second, the copies prepared by the two researchers are compared. If there are any mismatches, or, points of difference, the audio tape is replayed for the involved sections of the tape. If there are problems of disagreement, a third listener may be asked to resolve differences. Third, during the comparing process, one of the worksheet's markings is corrected and this will become the official worksheet copy. Finally, the person keying the miscues will play the tape once more and will mark all the intonation relations

that are not possible to represent appropriately by means of punctuation marks.

## 3 Marking System

It is important that all the departures from the expected responses (ER)—the text to be read out loud—during the audio taping session that the researcher has been able to detect should be included in the official worksheet copy. Goodman & Burke (1973) state that "the observed response (OR)—the way the reader reproduced the text—can vary from the expected response (ER) in five physical ways: insertion, omission, substitution, reversal, and regression" (p. 7). When the case of insertion is observed, it means that a new lexical or grammatical item is added to the existing ones

in the text. It is indicated with the help of a caret (∧). When the case of omission is observed, a text item is deleted from the ER, and it is not present in the OR. The omitted item is circled in the worksheet copy. Substitutions are cases when one or more text words are substituted by others. Substitutions are written above the line of print in the official worksheet copy. Reversals are phenomena when the position of the text items is altered in the OR. A curved line indicates these alterations. When parts of the ER are repeated, one can observe the phenomenon of regression. Regressions are indicated graphically in the official worksheet copy with a line drawn under the repeated print. Regressions should be coded in relation to

other reading phenomena, for example, these miscues may be corrected. It is possible that the correction is unsuccessful; the reader can replace the correctly read portion by an incorrect one, i.e. he abandons the correct form. Also, “when the reader regresses, not in order to change the item(s) repeated, but to attack material which is coming up in the text, the regression is marked RS in a circle—running start regression” (Goodman & Burke, 1973, p. 10). The Taxonomy presents eighteen categories of miscues: correction, dialect, graphic and phonemic proximity, allologs, syntactic acceptability, semantic acceptability, transformation, syntactic and semantic change, intonation, submorphemic level, bound and combined morpheme level, word and free

morpheme level, phrase level, clause level, grammatical category and surface structure of the OR, and the OR in visual periphery. In this section, the eighteen reading miscue categories are outlined.

Category 1. Correction

It is possible that a miscue occurs when one reads, of which the reader is unaware. This will result in uninterrupted continuation of the reading process. If this process is interrupted, usually it will be a sign of the fact that the reader realized his miscue. In such instances, the reader can choose between two options: either he corrects himself silently, or he does it orally. Although it is possible to trace the ways the reader corrects silently—for example, by

considering the pauses in reading, by examining the miscues during repeated occurrences of the same word in text—"the correction category in reading miscue analysis is used only to tally oral correction occurrences" (Goodman & Burke, 1973, p. 20).

Category 2. Dialect

It is a widely accepted fact that the dialects of a language are different in pronunciation, intonation, grammatical structures, and also, vocabulary. Because meaning or structural changes rarely occur when one speaks about phonemic and intonation variation, "only dialect miscues which involve vocabulary or structural changes will be coded in this

category" (Goodman & Burke, 1973, p. 22). Very often, in marking the dialect variations, a dollar sign ($) precedes the word, or non-word, in the OR.

An interesting subcategory (No5) of the dialect miscue is when a foreign language influence is involved in it. It implies that the reader is familiar with the sound system of a foreign language and when reading a text in his mother tongue, he applies this knowledge of the foreign pronunciation. For example*,

ER chair

OR $shair (French influence)

## Categories 3 and 4. Graphic and Phonemic Proximity

* The examples throughout this section are taken from Goodman and Burke (1973).

In the taxonomy, graphic and phonemic proximity is dealt with in the same way. They are marked on a zero to nine scale of increasing similarity, where the zero subcategory means that there is no graphic or phonemic similarity between the ER and the OR. The scale goes through subcategories where the ER and the OR have a key letter or sound in common, the beginning, middle, or end portions of the ER and OR are similar, there is a single grapheme or morpheme difference between the ER and the OR. Subcategory 9 ends the scale, stating that the ER and the OR are homographs—in case of graphic proximity—or homophones—in case of phonemic proximity.

Category 5. Allologs

Allologs are defined as “alternate representational forms for the same item” (Goodman & Burke, 1973, p. 31). When allolog forms are substituted, the meanings of the involved words or phrases do not change. Both forms are generally acceptable and the language user has them at his disposal, but he applies them in different situations and settings. When an allolog is not involved in the miscue, it should be marked or coded under the category ‘Dialect’. Allologs include instances when the OR is the contracted form of the ER; the OR is a full form of the ER contraction; the OR involves a shift to or from idiomatic form; the OR involves disarticulation. If the reader meets an

articulation difficulty and cannot produce the acceptable form, the miscue is marked ‘idiolect’.

Category 6. Syntactic Acceptability

The researcher can look at the syntactic organisation of the sentences the research subject is reading and define whether due to the effects of the miscue they are syntactically acceptable, i.e. “whether the OR produces a structure … which is acceptable within the context of the material” (Goodman & Burke, 1973, p. 33). For example,

ER Did you see my little monkey?

OR Did you see the little monkey?

Even if the grammatical function in the OR was changed from possessive pronoun to

determiner, syntactically the structure of the OR is completely acceptable. When the researcher wants to define whether the OR is syntactically acceptable, he has to read the whole sentence with all the original, uncorrected miscues intact. Four subgroups are distinguished within the category of syntactic acceptability, dealing with miscues that result in a syntactic structure which is fully unacceptable; miscues resulting in structures syntactically acceptable only with the prior or following portions of the sentences; or the observed structure can only be accepted within the sentence. In this case, the structure is acceptable, but “it does not fit within the structural restraints that are operating within

the larger context of the material" (Goodman & Burke, 1973, p. 35). For example,

ER Every year they give a prize to the student with the most original outside project.

OR Every year they gave a prize to the student with the most original outside project.

Goodman and Burke (1973) explain that the story the above example is taken from tells about its author's attempt to win the prize. Therefore, the action must be in continuation, and past simple should not be used as this implies the end of the action, not its progress.

The last subgroup in the category of syntactic acceptability examines the miscues that result in structures syntactically acceptable within the total passage, for example:

ER He wanted to see what was inside.

OR He went to see what was inside.

Category 7. Semantic Acceptability

Similar to the previous category, this one of semantic acceptability also purports to determine whether the OR pronounced by the reader is acceptable or not, with the difference that this time the meaning or the semantic structure of the OR is under analysis. The process of determining semantic acceptability is quite the same as that of determining syntactic acceptability. Because multiple miscues are possible within a sentence, it is necessary to read the whole of it with all uncorrected miscues intact.

The subcategories in this category include miscues resulting in structures totally unacceptable semantically—when the meaning of the entire sentence is broken up by the miscue, and the miscue has no semantic relationship with any part of the sentence in which it occurred; miscues resulting in structures that are semantically acceptable either with the prior or the following portions of the sentence. Or, it is possible that the miscues result in structures that are semantically acceptable within the sentence in which they occur, or within the total passage. For example,

ER Freddie tried, with all his strength, but he couldn’t open the closet door.

OR Freddie tried, with all his strength, but he couldn't open the closed door.

Category 8. Transformation

Goodman and Burke (1973) claim that the reader applies his pre-generated and already transformed grammatical structures when reading. They state that the reader's "miscues reflect his anticipation of the deep structure, surface structure, and the meaning with which he is dealing" (p. 40). For better understanding, the definitions of these terms should be presented here. Thus, the Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics (Richards, Platt, & Platt, 1992) says that "the surface structure is the syntactic structure of the sentence which a person

speaks, hears, reads, or writes. The deep structure is much more abstract and is considered to be in the speaker's, writer's, hearer's or reader's mind. It is a level of sentence structure which shows the basic form of a spoken or written sentence in the language" (p. 99).

The last subgroup within this category deals with the question of whether or not a transformation is involved in the miscue. In such cases, this category should be coded 'doubtful'. The reason behind the fact that one is doubtful whether transformation occurred is that either the OR includes a very limited portion of structure, or there is some confusion that concerns the limits of the parameters of the transformation category.

## Categories 9 & 10. Syntactic and Semantic Change

These two taxonomy categories contain miscues of the OR that cause syntactic and semantic change. Here, the main task is to measure or evaluate the extensiveness of the miscue in the syntactic and semantic structure of the ER. A scale of increasing similarity from zero to nine is used to score these changes. As Goodman and Burke (1973) underline, “the points of the scales are intended to have equal weight across the two categories” (p. 46). A description of syntactic change between the ER and the OR is provided in the Taxonomy, which introduces the points on the scale mentioned above. First,

it states that the syntax of the OR and the ER are unrelated. Then, the syntax of the OR and the ER have a single element in common. Further on it mentions minor and major changes in the syntax of the OR. The semantic change can be the alteration in person, tense, number, or gender of the OR, for example:

ER How he wanted to go back. ER I made a special mixture.

OR How he wants to go back. OR He made a special mixture.

It is also important to measure the degree of semantic change between the ER and the OR in situations when a semantically acceptable sentence has been the result of the miscue. Again, to determine semantic change, all the uncorrected miscues in the sentences made

previous to the miscue being keyed must be read. The nine points on the scale are: a change or loss affecting the plot in basic sense or creating major anomalies; a change or loss involving key aspects of the story or seriously interfering with sub-plots; a change or loss resulting in inconsistency concerning a major incident, major character, or major aspect of sequence; a change or loss resulting in inconsistency concerning a minor incident, minor character, or minor aspect of sequence; a change or loss of aspect which is significant but does not create inconsistencies within the story; a change in person, tense, number, comparative, etc. which is non-critical to the story; a slight change in connotation, or, substitution of a similar name which does not

confuse the cast; no change involving story meaning.

Category 11. Intonation

It is considered that virtually all miscues include intonation changes. This category does not aim to register all of these changes, but "only those situations where the intonation change is part of the direct cause of the miscue and not only a result of other changes" (Goodman & Burke. 1973, p. 56). The first subcategory (coded 11.0) within Intonation registers the miscues in which the intonation shifts result from other changes which the reader has made, therefore, intonation is not involved in the miscue. For example,

ER "You are too little," said Father.

OR “You is too little,” said Father.

The second subcategory (coded 11.1) involves an intonation shift—indicated by means of the sign ‘=’—within a word, the result of which is either a non-word, or a different lexical item. For example,

ER … lingered over the high Arizona desert, …

OR … lingered over the high Arizona de=sert, …

The third subcategory (coded 11.2) involves an intonation shift between words within one phrase structure of the sentence that does not cause alterations beyond phrase structure boundaries. For example,

ER … came from jungle rivers where …

OR … came from Jungle River where …

In the above example, the adjective position of the word ‘jungle’ is altered, and in the OR it becomes part of a proper name (‘Jungle River’).

The fourth subcategory (coded 11.3) involves intonation which is relative to the phrase or clause structure of the sentence. Unlike the intonation shift in the previous subcategory, in this one the shift causes changes beyond phrase structure boundaries, for example:

ER Tomorrow we must crown a Miss America who has buck teeth, cash in Las Vegas, abandon our calling cards and list everyone in Who’s Who.

OR Tomorrow we must crown a Miss America who has buck teeth, cash in Las

Vegas, abandon our calling cards and list everyone in Who's Who.

In this example, the ER sentence's 'cash in' is a phrasal verb meaning ' to turn in', while in the OR sentence a noun meaning 'money' plus a prepositional phrase was anticipated by the reader.

The fifth subgroup (coded 11.4) involves a shift in terminal sentence intonation, for example:

ER It was fun to go to school. When he wasn't in school, he skated with his friends.

OR It was fun to go to school when he wasn't in school. He skated with his friends.

The sixth subgroup (coded 11.5) contains miscues being intonation changes that involve

a substitution of a conjunction for terminal punctuation, or vice versa. For example,

ER The boys fished and then they cooked their catch.

OR The boys fished. Then they cooked their catch.

ER She pounded the young trees into long strings. From the strings she made beautiful baskets.

OR She pounded the young trees into long strings and from the strings she made beautiful baskets.

In the seventh subcategory (coded 11.6), one can find miscues in which the intonation change involves direct quotes, for example:

ER “Tom,” said mother.

OR Tom said, “Mother.”

Categories 12 to 16. Levels

This set of categories includes different miscues at the structural levels of language. These are the submorphemic level, the bound and combined morpheme level, word and free morpheme level, the phrase level, and the clause level. Goodman and Burke (1973) state that "change at one level causes changes at all of the succeeding levels. For this reason, the categories in this section become increasingly selective of the phenomena which they record as they incorporate subsequent categories" (p. 58). In Category 12, which is the Submorphemic Level, the sound differences between the ER and the OR are registered. These sound differences constitute one and

two morpheme sequences and bound morphemes composed of a schwa sound and a consonant sound. Phenomena that are recorded here concern the substitution, insertion, omission, and reversal of phonemes within a word.

In Category 13, which is the Bound and Combined Morpheme Level, the miscues are first coded for their physical qualities—substitution, insertion, omission, reversal—and then for the kind of morphemic involvement, such as inflectional suffix, non-inflected form, contractional suffix, derivational suffix, prefix, and base form.

Category 14 entitled Word and Free Morpheme Level, contains miscues which are also marked first for their physical qualities,

and then for the kind of morphemic involvement. This involvement includes a multiple morpheme word, a single morpheme word, a free morpheme within a longer word, one or both of the free morphemes in a compound or hyphenated word, or non-word, etc.

Category 15 is the one of Phrase Level. Goodman and Burke (1973) specify that in this category, “the surface structure of a sentence is treated as being composed of possible noun and verb phrases with the verb phrase consisting of possible verb and adverb phrases” (p. 69). Five types of miscues are recorded in this category. The first case (coded 15.0) is when the Phrase Level Category is not involved in the miscue. The second is (code

15.1) when the substitution is involved at the phrase level. Further types include cases when an insertion is involved at the phrase level (code 15.2); an omission is involved at the phrase level (code 15.3); a reversal is involved at the phrase level (code 15.4).

The next level is that of a clause. Different combinations of independent, dependent, and embedded clauses make up the surface structure of a sentence. It is believed that both at the deep structure and surface structure levels a clause is composed of a noun phrase and a verb phrase (Goodman & Burke, 1973). Thus, Category 16 in the Goodman Taxonomy of Reading Miscues is the category of Clause Level. There are seven subgroups within this category, ranging from miscues in which the

clause level is not involved through miscues in which a substitution, an insertion, and a reversal is involved at the clause level, to miscues where clause dependency is altered across sentences.

## Category 17. Grammatical Category and Surface Structure of OR

Goodman and Burke (1973) saw a lack of a system describing the grammatical structure of a language passage. They realized that Latin-based traditional grammars could not be used to describe English as they incorporated many misconceptions. The authors acknowledge that "generative transformational modals are better suited to process, but do not fully explain surface structures, their relationships to deep

structures, and the rules used for generating them" (p.76).

In the research on reading miscues, the aim was to compare "the writer's surface structure with one regenerated by the reader" (Goodman & Burke, 1973, p. 76). For this reason, there was a need for a system that could be applied in assigning a grammatical function to every text word of a piece of prose. Such a system was the descriptive grammar developed by Fries, together with the use of transformational analysis. Five general categories are distinguished in this system—noun, verb, noun modifier, verb modifier, and function word. Also, "two additional categories are used for words of indeterminate grammatical function and for contractions. Nouns, verbs, adjectives,

and adverbs are additionally marked for filler and function aspects" (ibid.).

Category 18 OR in Visual Periphery

It is possible that a substitution or an insertion miscue occurs under the influence of a text item in the reader's visual peripheral field. This means that the reader scans the text and his reading can be affected by text items that are in his visual periphery. This category records word level substitution and insertion miscues and examines the five text lines immediately surrounding the miscue, i.e. it looks at the near and extended context, or visual periphery, of the miscue. For example,

Mother looked ~~at~~ Freddie. Mother [Father] looked at Freddie.

She said, “You are too little Near She said, “You are too little to help Father and [said] Jack. to help Father and Jack. Extended You are not too little to help me. You are not too little to help me.

Here is something you can do. Here is something you can do.

To sum up, the purpose of the present section was to give an overview of the Goodman Taxonomy of Reading Miscues, explaining its eighteen categories in some detail and providing some guidance on how to code certain miscues during research. It can be

concluded that reading miscues vary in their physical quality— they can be substitutions, insertions, omissions, and reversals. They might occur because of phonemic or graphic proximity to the original text, or due to other text items in the visual peripheral field of the reader, etc. They can cause syntactic and semantic changes, as well as intonation changes to the original text.

The procedure of research involving miscue analysis has been described, too. Goodman and Burke (1973) claim that besides recording the reader's oral reading performance during which miscues occur, it is also important to check the reader's understanding of the text. This can be done by asking him to retell the plot of the text, paying attention to characters and plot of the story. Then, by the help of a scoring system it is possible to evaluate the rate of reading comprehension. Although the scoring instructions are virtually clear, the system itself seems to be arbitrary.

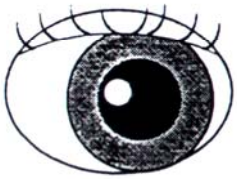
# APPENDIX 5

## Proficiency Test for Form 6 Learners

### Part 1
– 5 Questions –

Look and read. Put a tick (✓) or a cross (✗) in the box.
There are two examples.

Examples



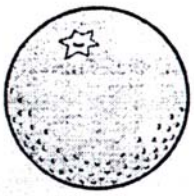
This is an eye. ✓

This is a television. ✗

Questions
1

This is a lizard. ☐

2



This is a pear. ☐

3

This is a skirt. ☐

4

This is a doll. ☐

5

This is a motorbike. ☐

## Part 2
– 5 questions –

**Look and read. Write yes or no.**

**Examples**

There are five children in the playground. yes

One girl is playing with the rabbits. no

**Questions**

1 One girl is sitting down. She is eating a sandwich. .....

2 Two children are hopping and laughing. .....

3 There are five rabbits. Two are brown and three are white. .....

4 A boy is watching the rabbits. He is drinking. .....

5 The boy with glasses is reading. .....

# Part 3

**– 5 questions –**

**Look at the pictures. Look at the letters. Write the words.**

**Example**

g l a s s e s

e s s l s g a

**Questions**

1

_ _ _ _ _

i t s r h

2

_ _ _ _ _

s s e o h

3

_ _ _ _ _

s e s d r

4

_ _ _ _ _

k t r i s

5

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

s e r t u r o s

# Part 4

**– 5 Questions –**

**Read the story. Look at the pictures and the two examples. Write one-word answers.**

What am I?

I live in a  house ..... with a family. There are

 mice ..... in the house, and I catch them. I eat meat

and  ....., and I drink milk or water. In the day

I sleep on an  ....., or I play in the

 ..... . I watch the  ..... in

the trees. I can see at night.

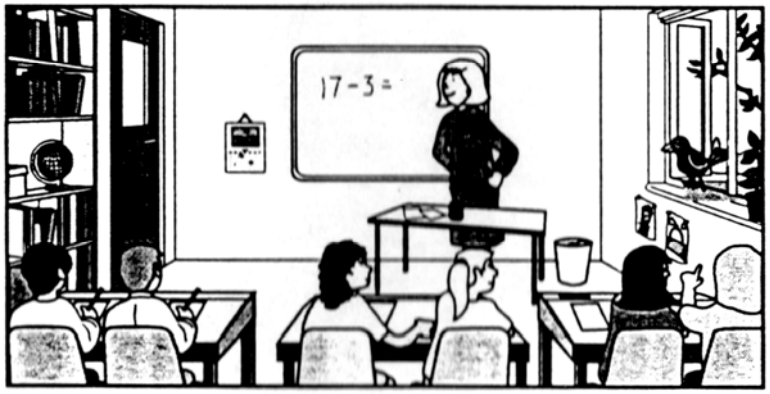
What am I?

I am a _ _ _ .

# Part 5

**– 5 questions –**

**Look at the pictures and read the questions. Write one-word answers.**



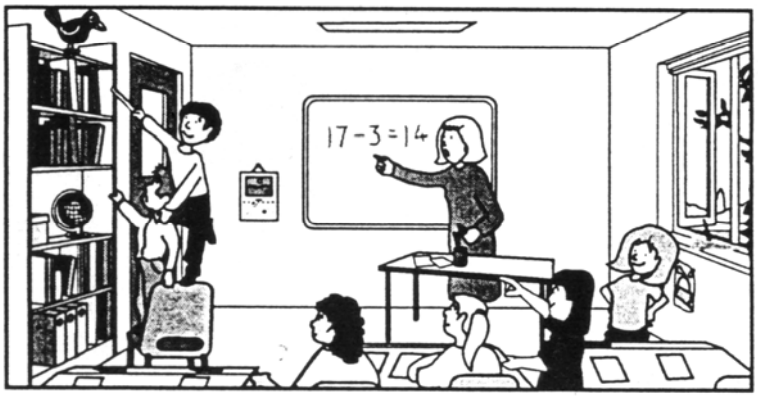

**Examples**

How many children are there? six

Where are the children? in the classroom

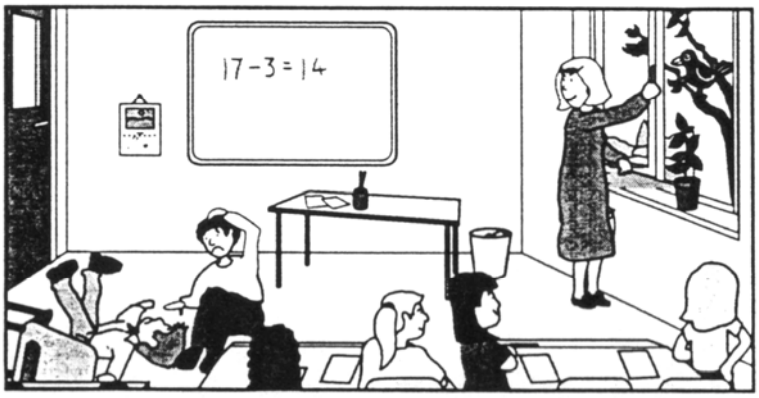
**Questions**

1 What are the girls looking at? a .....




2 Where is the bird now? on the .....

3 How many children are on the chair? .....




4 Where are the two boys now? on the .....

5 Who is closing the window? the .....

**APPENDIX 6**

**Text 1**

# The ant and the pigeon

A pigeon lived on a tree. An ant had its home under the same tree. The pigeon and the ant were good friends. One day it rained and rained. There was much water under the tree and the ant got into the water.

The pigeon saw the ant in the water and thought, ‘My friend is in trouble, I must help him.’

He threw a leaf in the water and told the ant to climb on it. Then the pigeon flew down, picked up the leaf and brought the ant safely on the land.

One day a hunter came to their tree. He wanted to catch the pigeon and he put a net under the tree. He put some grains near the net. The pigeon saw the grains. He came down from the tree and was going to eat the grains.

The ant saw it and thought, ‘My friend will be in trouble if he goes near the grains. I must stop him.’

Then the ant ran to the pigeon and pricked him in his foot. The pigeon flew away. He saw the hunter and said to the ant, ‘You saved my life. Thank you, dear ant. A friend in need is a friend indeed.’

205 words

**APPENDIX 7**

**Text 2**

**Hippo's toothache**

Harry Hippo awoke early one morning.

'OWWWW!' he moaned. 'I have a horrible, terrible toothache.'

Harry moaned and groaned. He moaned and groaned so loudly he woke everyone up.

'What is wrong?' they asked. 'Why is Harry moaning and groaning so loudly?'

'Harry has a toothache,' said his wife, Harriet.

'What shall we do?' asked Polly the Parrot.

'We will have to pull out the tooth,' said Harriet.

'But who will pull it out?' asked Polly.

'I will,' said Milly the Gorilla.

'But how will you pull it out?' asked Ziggy the Lion.

Milly went off to find a vine She tied the vine to Harry's tooth, and she pulled on the vine. She pulled and pulled, but the tooth did not come out.

'Let me help,' said Ziggy.

So Ziggy and Milly pulled but the tooth did not come out.

'What will we do now?' asked Polly.

'I have an idea,' said Milly.

They took Harry to a cliff and tied the vine to a big rock. They pushed the rock over the cliff. But Harry's tooth did not come out.

'Now what?' asked Ziggy.

'I have a better idea,' said Polly, and she flew off.

Harry moaned and groaned even louder. Later, Polly came back with Ella, the Elephant.

'Ella will help us pull Harry's tooth,' said Polly.

The tied the vine to Ella. She pulled and pulled, but the tooth did not come out. Then out of the jungle crept a mouse. Ella saw the mouse and took off running very fast. Out came Harry's tooth. Harry stopped moaning and groaning. Once again the jungle was quiet. Everyone was happy, especially Harry.

275 words

**APPENDIX 8**

**Text 3**

# A friend in need is a friend indeed

Two friends agreed to travel together on a dangerous journey through the forest. On their way through the forest they suddenly saw a bear coming towards them. One of the friends, without considering his companion, climbed up into a tree and hid himself. The other, seeing that he had no chance alone against the bear, had nothing left to do but to throw himself on the ground and pretend to be dead; for he had heard that the bear will never touch a dead body.

As the man thus lay, the bear came up to his head. It began to smell at his nose, his ears and his heart but the man lay without moving and held his breath. The beast, supposing him to be dead, walked away.

When the bear was out of sight, the friend who had climbed up the tree, came down and joked about their adventure.

'I observed,' he said, 'that the bear put his mouth close to your ear. What did he whisper to you?'

'Oh,' answered the other, 'it was no secret he only warned me to be careful with whom I travelled. He advised me not to take as companions those who, when trouble comes, leave their friends to face it alone.'

209 words

## APPENDIX 9

### Retrospective learner interview protocol

### (English version)

**READING ALOUD =** the process during which the learner utters a printed text out loud in the English language lesson. The text pronounced by the learner is a printed passage in the learner's textbook and is unknown to him or her.

**Personal data of interviewee:**

Age:

Sex:

Number of years learning English:

1. Do you think there were parts in the text you had read that caused difficulty for you in understanding the text?
2. What happened when ... (based on the interviewer's worksheet copy)?
3. Do you ever read aloud texts from your textbook in the English lessons?
4. Do you like to read aloud in English?
5. Why? / Why not?
6. What happens after you have read a text or part of a text aloud from the English textbook?
   a) you answer comprehension questions presented in the textbook
   b) your teacher puts you questions based on the text you have read and you answer them
   c) you retell the text in English
   d) you retell the text in Hungarian
   e) you retell the text both in English and Hungarian
   f) you translate the text you have read or part of it into Hungarian
   g) you do some kind of written exercise based on the text, e.g. gap fill
   h) other

7. What does your teacher do when you make 'a mistake' during reading aloud? (Corrects the mistake? Immediately or only later?
8. Do you personally learn from the mistakes corrected by the teacher?
9. Does it mean you will not make the same mistake when you read aloud the next time?

**Thank you for your answers.**

**APPENDIX 10**

**Teacher interview protocol**

**(English version)**

**READING ALOUD** = the process during which the learner utters a printed text out loud in the English language lesson. The text pronounced by the learner is a printed passage in the learner's textbook and is unknown to him or her.

**Personal data of interviewee:**

Age:

Sex:

Number of years teaching English:

1. What are the local educational authorities' (or those of the Ministry of Education and Science) general requirements concerning learners' FL reading in the English classroom? Prompt: what type of reading should be used?
2. Are there any requirements on learners' reading aloud in English?
3. Do you apply the technique of learner reading aloud during your English lessons? Why? / Why not?
4. Does learner reading aloud represent 'common practice' in your English language classroom in Forms 6 and 7? Do learners read aloud texts from their English textbook in every English lesson?
5. What is the purpose of learners' reading aloud in your English lessons?
6. Is it obligatory to have learners 'read aloud for time'?
7. What do you do when you hear a miscue made by a learner? Prompt: neglecting the miscue, correcting the miscue immediately when heard, etc.
8. What types of mistakes do you correct? What do you not correct?
9. Do you believe that your learners learn from the miscues you have corrected and they will not make the same 'mistakes' the following time they read aloud?
10. Do all the learners read aloud texts from the textbook in one and the same lesson or only certain ones?
11. If only certain learners do that, which ones? How do you select them?
12. What, in your understanding, is your learners' attitude to reading in English—silent and oral—like?
13. In your view, how does reading aloud help comprehension of a text?

**Thank you for your answers.**

**APPENDIX 11**

**Educational manager interview protocol**

**(English version)**

**READING ALOUD =** the process during which the learner utters a printed text out loud in the English language lesson. The text pronounced by the learner is a printed passage in the learner's textbook and is unknown to him or her.

**Personal data of interviewee:**

Age:

Sex:

Place of work:

Profession:

Number of years working in education:

1. How important do you think it is that learners learn to read well in English at the beginning stage of studying a foreign language?
2. What role does reading aloud play in the language lesson?
3. Do you think it depends on the nationality—Hungarian, Ukrainian, or Russian—of the language learner?
4. Based on your experiences, do teachers have learners read aloud in the English lessons in schools with Hungarian language of instruction in Transcarpathia? With what purposes? What benefits can learners or teachers get from this?
5. What role do you think reading aloud plays in developing learners' reading skills?
6. Does the National Curriculum for Foreign Languages 'prescribe' the use of learners' reading aloud in the English lessons? If so, are there any criteria for this? (E.g. reading aloud for a certain time slot, etc.)?
7. Do the educational authorities in Transcarpathia require from teachers of English in Hungarian schools that they use the technique of learners' reading aloud in the English lessons?

**Thank you for your answers.**

**APPENDIX 12**

**Outline 1**

**"The ant and the pigeon"**

**(based on Goodman & Burke, 1973)**

**Characters**: pigeon, ant, hunter.

**Character development**: Pigeon, ant — friendly, helpful; hunter — shrewd, cruel, terrible.

**Theme**: friendship and helping one's friend

**Plot**: Once a pigeon and an ant lived on and under the same tree. They were good friends. One day it reined a lot and the ant got into the water. The pigeon threw him a leaf on which the ant climbed and the pigeon took the leaf safely on the land. Once a hunter wanted to catch the pigeon by giving him grains. The ant saw and understood the situation and saved the pigeon by making him fly away (the ant pricked the pigeon's foot). In this way the two friends helped each other, so "A friend in need is a friend indeed".

**Events**:

1. A pigeon lived on a tree.
2. An ant lived under the same tree.
3. They were good friends.
4. One day it rained.
5. There was much water under the tree.
6. The ant got into the water.
7. The pigeon saw the ant in the water.
8. The pigeon thought he had to help the ant.
9. He threw a leaf in the water.
10. The pigeon told the ant to climb on the leaf.
11. The pigeon flew down.
12. The pigeon picked up the leaf.
13. The pigeon brought the ant safely on the land.
14. One day a hunter came to the tree where they were living.
15. The hunter wanted to catch the pigeon.
16. He put a net under the tree.
17. The hunter put some grains near the net.
18. The pigeon saw the grains.
19. The pigeon came down the tree.
20. The pigeon was going / wanted to eat the grains.

21. The ant saw it.
22. The ant thought he had to stop the pigeon.
23. The ant ran to the pigeon.
24. The ant pricked the pigeon in his foot.
25. The pigeon flew away.
26. The pigeon saw the hunter.
27. The pigeon thanked the ant that he saved his life.
28. A friend in need is a friend indeed.

**APPENDIX 13**

**Outline 2**

**"Hippo's toothache"**

**(based on Goodman & Burke, 1973)**

**Characters**: Harry Hippo, Harriet (his wife), Polly the Parrot, Milly the Gorilla, Ziggy the Lion, Ella the Elephant, a mouse

**Character development**: friendly, all willing to help the animal who was in trouble.

**Theme**: friendship and helping one's friend

**Plot**: Harry Hippo lived in the jungle with his wife, Harriet, and his friends. One morning he awoke having a terrible toothache. Everyone in the jungle woke up and asked why Harry was moaning and groaning. They all wanted to help. They tried to pull out Harry's tooth, but it did not come out. At last, a little mouse helped them and Harry's tooth came out. Everybody was happy and the jungle was quiet again.

**Events**:

1. Harry Hippo awoke early one morning.
2. He had a toothache.
3. It was terrible.
4. Harry moaned and groaned.
5. He did it loudly.
6. He woke everyone up in the jungle.
7. Everybody asked why Harry was moaning and groaning.
8. Harriet, Harry's wife, told them the reason (Harry had a terrible toothache).
9. Polly the Parrot asked what they should do.
10. They had to pull out the tooth.
11. Polly asked who would pull out the tooth.
12. Milly the Gorilla suggested that she would.
13. Ziggy the Lion asked how she would do it.
14. Milly went off to find a wine.
15. She tied the vine to Harry's tooth.
16. She pulled on the vine.
17. She pulled and pulled.
18. The tooth did not come out.
19. Polly asked what they would do then.

20. Milly said she had an idea.
21. They took Harry to a cliff.
22. They tied the vine to a big rock.
23. They pushed the rock over the cliff.
24. Harry's tooth did not come out.
25. Ziggy asked what to do next.
26. Polly said she had a better idea.
27. She flew off.
28. Harry moaned and groaned even louder.
29. Later, Polly came back with Ella the Elephant.
30. Polly explained that Ella would help them pull Harry's tooth.
31. They tied the vine to Ella.
32. She pulled and pulled.
33. The tooth did not come out.
34. Then a mouse crept out of the jungle.
35. Ella saw the mouse.
36. Ella began to run very fast.
37. Harry's tooth came out.
38. Harry stopped moaning and groaning.
39. The jungle was quiet again.
40. Everyone was happy.
41. Especially Harry was happy.

**APPENDIX 14**

**Comprehension Questions**

**to the text "Hippo's Toothache"**

(Final English version)

1. What was the problem with Harry Hippo?
2. Where did he live?
3. Who did he live with?
4. Who wanted to help Harry?
5. How did they want to help Harry?
6. What did Milly the Gorilla do?
7. When did Harry's tooth come out?
8. Who was happy at the end of the story?

**APPENDIX 15**

**Comprehension Questions**

**to the text "The Ant and the Pigeon"**

(Final English version)

1. Who were friends?
2. Where did they live?
3. What happened one day? Did anyone help the *ant*?
4. How did *the pigeon* / one animal help *the ant* / the other?
5. Who came to their tree one day?
6. What did he want to do? Did anyone help *the pigeon*?
7. How did *the ant* help *the pigeon*?
8. What is the essence of the story?

**APPENDIX 16**

**Class observation sheet**

**Date _____ Class _____**
**Class teacher _____ Number of learners present _____**
**School _____**

| Reader | Name | Timing of reading | | Ways of teacher responding to learner miscues | | | | | | | Total number of miscues |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Start | End | Non-response | Immediate correction | Delayed correction | Word-cueing | Providing the word | Other | | |
| | | | | | | | | | No | Method | |
| 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 10 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 11 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 12 | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| 14 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 15 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 16 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 17 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 18 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 19 | | | | | | | | | | | |

# APPENDIX 17

## Worksheet copies with miscues of six learners

The ant and the pigeon

laivd aentC some
A pigeon lived on a tree. An ant had its home under the same tree. The pigeon and the
raind raind
ant were good friends. One day it rained and rained. There was much water under the tree and
weather
the ant got into the water.

The pigeon saw the ant in the water and thought, 'My friend is in trouble, I must help him.'

He threw a leaf in the water and told the ant to climb on it. Then the pigeon flew down, picked up the leaf and brought the ant safely on the land.

One day a hunter came to their tree. He wanted to catch the pigeon and he put a net under the tree. He put some grains near the net. The pigeon saw the grains. He came down from the tree and was going to eat the grains.

The ant saw it and thought, 'My friend will be in trouble if he goes near the grains. I must stop him.'

Then the ant ran to the pigeon and pricked him in his foot. The pigeon flew away. He saw the hunter and said to the ant, 'You saved my life. Thank you, dear ant. A friend in need is a friend indeed.'

LEARNER: C 10

NOTES: More or less proper reading and accurate reading

Hippo's toothache

Harry Hippo awoke early one morning.

'OWWWW!' he moaned. 'I have a horrible, terrible toothache.'

monid gronid monid gronid

Harry moaned and groaned. He moaned and groaned so loudly he woke everyone up.

'What is wrong?' they asked. 'Why is Harry moaning and groaning so loudly?'

'Harry has a toothache,' said his wife, Harriet.

'What shall we do?' asked Polly the Parrot.

pahl

'We will have to pull out the tooth,' said Harriet.

pahl

'But who will pull it out?' asked Polly.

'I will,' said Milly the Gorilla.

'But how will you pull it out?' asked Ziggy the Lion.

teed

Milly went off to find a vine She tied the vine to Harry's tooth, and she pulled on the vine. She pulled and pulled, but the tooth did not come out.

'Let me help,' said Ziggy.

So Ziggy and Milly pulled but the tooth did not come out.

'What will we do now?' asked Polly.

idee

'I have an idea,' said Milly.

slif

They took Harry to a cliff and tied the vine to a big rock. They pushed the rock over the cliff. But Harry's tooth did not come out.

'Now what?' asked Ziggy.

'I have a better idea,' said Polly, and she flew off.

mounid grounid

Harry moaned and groaned even louder. Later, Polly came back with Ella, the Elephant.

'Ella will help us pull Harry's tooth,' said Polly.

They tied the vine to Ella. She pulled and pulled, but the tooth did not come out. Then out of the jungle crept a mouse. Ella saw the mouse and took off running very fast. Out came

come

ons

Harry's tooth. Harry stopped moaning and groaning. Once again the jungle was quiet. Everyone was happy, especially Harry.

NOTES: showed effort in trying to be accurate in reading

LEARNER: C 10

The ant and the pigeon

A pigeon lived on a tree. An ant had its home under the same tree. The pigeon and the ant were good friends. One day it rained and rained. There was much water under the tree and the ant got into the water.

The pigeon saw the ant in the water and thought, 'My friend is in trouble, I must help him.'

He threw a leaf in the water and told the ant to climb on it. Then the pigeon flew down, picked up the leaf and brought the ant safely on the land.

One day a hunter came to their tree. He wanted to catch the pigeon and he put a net under the tree. He put some grains near the net. The pigeon saw the grains. He came down from the tree and was going to eat the grains.

The ant saw it and thought, 'My friend will be in trouble if he goes near the grains. I must stop him.'

Then the ant ran to the pigeon and pricked him in his foot. The pigeon flew away. He saw the hunter and said to the ant, 'You saved my life. Thank you, dear ant. A friend in need is a friend indeed.'

LEARNER: F2

NOTES: slow but accurate and fluent reading

Hippo's toothache

Harry Hippo awoke early one morning.

'OWWWW!' he moaned. 'I have a horrible, terrible toothache.'

Harry moaned and groaned. He moaned and groaned so loudly he woke everyone up.

'What is wrong?' they asked. 'Why is Harry moaning and groaning so loudly?'

'Harry has a toothache,' said his wife, Harriet.

'What shall we do?' asked Polly the Parrot.

'We will have to pull out the tooth,' said Harriet.

'But who will pull it out?' asked Polly.

'I will,' said Milly the Gorilla.

'But how will you pull it out?' asked Ziggy the Lion.

Milly went off to find a vine. She tied the vine to Harry's tooth, and she pulled on the vine. She pulled and pulled, but the tooth did not come out.

'Let me help,' said Ziggy.

So Ziggy and Milly pulled but the tooth did not come out.

'What will we do now?' asked Polly.

'I have an idea,' said Milly.

They took Harry to a cliff and tied the vine to a big rock. They pushed the rock over the cliff. But Harry's tooth did not come out.

'Now what?' asked Ziggy.

'I have a better idea,' said Polly, and she flew off.

Harry moaned and groaned even louder. Later, Polly came back with Ella, the Elephant.

'Ella will help us pull Harry's tooth,' said Polly.

They tied the vine to Ella. She pulled and pulled, but the tooth did not come out. Then out of the jungle crept a mouse. Ella saw the mouse and took off running very fast. Out came Harry's tooth. Harry stopped moaning and groaning. Once again the jungle was quiet. Everyone was happy, especially Harry.

NOTES: slow but nice and fluent reading; obvious comprehension of the essence of the plot. Paying attention to punctuation marks.

LEARNER: F2

The ant and the pigeon

A pigeon lived on a tree. An ant had its home under the same tree. The pigeon and the ant were good friends. One day it rained and rained. There was much water under the tree and the ant got into the water.

The pigeon saw the ant in the water and thought, 'My friend is in trouble, I must help him.'

He threw a leaf in the water and told the ant to climb on it. Then the pigeon flew down, picked up the leaf and brought the ant safely on the land.

One day a hunter came (come) to their tree. He wanted to catch the pigeon and he put a net under the tree. He put some grains near the net. The pigeon saw the grains. He came down from the tree and was going to eat the grains.

The ant saw it and thought, 'My friend will be in trouble if he goes near the grains. I must stop him.'

Then the ant ran to the pigeon and pricked him in his foot. The pigeon flew away. He saw the hunter and said to the ant, 'You saved my life. Thank you, dear ant. A friend in need is a friend indeed.'

LEARNER: G13
NOTES: Good reading with some short pauses

Hippo's toothache

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'What is wrong?' they asked. 'Why is Harry moaning and groaning so loudly?'

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'What shall we do?' asked Polly the Parrot.

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Milly went off to find a vine She tied the vine to Harry's tooth, and she pulled on the vine. She pulled and pulled, but the tooth did not come out.

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'I have an idea,' said Milly.

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'Now what?' asked Ziggy.

'I have a better idea,' said Polly, and she flew off.

Harry moaned and groaned even louder. Later, Polly came back with Ella, the Elephant.

'Ella will help us pull Harry's tooth,' said Polly.

They tied the vine to Ella. She pulled and pulled, but the tooth did not come out. Then out of the jungle crept a mouse. Ella saw the mouse and took off running very fast. Out came Harry's tooth. Harry stopped moaning and groaning. Once again the jungle was quiet. Everyone was happy, especially Harry.

LEARNER: G13

NOTES: Fluent and accurate reading, although sometimes does not concentrate on commas

The ant and the pigeon

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ant were good friends. One day it rained and rained. There was much water under the tree and
the ant got into the water.
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picked up the leaf and brought the ant safely on the land.
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must stop him.'
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Then the ant ran to the pigeon and pricked him in his foot. The pigeon flew away. He
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is a friend indeed.'

LEARNER: B 14

NOTES: nice and fluent reading, but obviously little comprehension

Hippo's toothache

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'Ella will help us pull Harry's tooth,' said Polly.

They tied the vine to Ella. She pulled and pulled, but the tooth did not come out. Then out of the jungle crept a mouse. Ella saw the mouse and took off running very fast. Out came Harry's tooth. Harry stopped moaning and groaning. Once again the jungle was quiet. Everyone was happy, especially Harry.

NOTES: In general, not too bad

LEARNER: B 14

The ant and the pigeon

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LEARNER : C7
NOTES: Poor reading, no fluency

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'Ella will help us pull Harry's tooth,' said Polly.

They tied the vine to Ella. She pulled and pulled, but the tooth did not come out. Then out of the jungle crept a mouse. Ella saw the mouse and took off running very fast. Out came Harry's tooth. Harry stopped moaning and groaning. Once again the jungle was quiet. Everyone was happy, especially Harry.

LEARNER: C7
NOTES: Very poor reading, almost no understanding

The ant and the pigeon

A pigeon lived on a tree. An ant had its home under the same tree. The pigeon and the ant were good friends. One day it rained and rained. There was much water under the tree and the ant got into the water.

The pigeon saw the ant in the water and thought, 'My friend is in trouble, I must help him.'

He threw a leaf in the water and told the ant to climb on it. Then the pigeon flew down, picked up the leaf and brought the ant safely on the land.

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The ant saw it and thought, 'My friend will be in trouble if he goes near the grains. I must stop him.'

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LEARNER: E5

NOTES: slow reading aloud, nicely intonated

Hippo's toothache

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Harry moaned and groaned even louder. Later, Polly came back with Ella, the Elephant.

'Ella will help us pull Harry's tooth,' said Polly.

They tied the vine to Ella. She pulled and pulled, but the tooth did not come out. Then out of the jungle crept a mouse. Ella saw the mouse and took off running very fast. Out came Harry's tooth. Harry stopped moaning and groaning. Once again the jungle was quiet. Everyone was happy, especially Harry.

LEARNER : E5

NOTES : interrupted reading, without proper intonation patterns; sometimes reading as if reading a word list