

## Introduction: Crossing the Boundaries

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History has witnessed numerous transformations of second language (L2) teaching. Nonetheless, the teaching of reading has hitherto remained a central component of any L2 curricula, communicative or non-communicative. Accordingly, in comparison with the teaching of other aspects of language use—such as grammar, listening, speaking, and writing—reading has received the most attention from applied linguists (see, e.g., Aebersold & Field, 1997; Anderson, 1999; Bell, 1995; Bernhardt, 1991; Carrell, 1983a, 1984, 1991; Carrell, Devine, & Eskey, 1988; Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983; Nuttall, 1996; Urquhart & Weir, 1998) and ESL/EFL teachers.

To date, however, research and instruction on L2 reading have pursued three disparate approaches: whole language, skills, or acquisition. While both the whole language approach and the skills approach treat reading as a literacy skill, focusing thereby on the role of comprehension, the former emphasizes knowledge-based processes in discourse comprehension and interpretation and the latter, on the other

hand, stresses micro and macro comprehension skills and strategies that may lead to better comprehension. Neither is similar to an acquisition approach that takes account of reading as a source of input for L2 acquisition (i.e., construction of linguistic competence). Importantly, the difference separating the three approaches goes beyond their respective domains of concern; rather, due to their epistemological differences, the three approaches offer conceptions and practical suggestions that are oftentimes contradictory. This scenario not only prevents a coherent understanding of L2 reading but also breeds lack of efficacy for instruction. This issue is becoming acute both in the United States, as more and more English language learners are placed in mainstream subject-matter classes in K–12 schools, and in many countries where communicative language teaching moves toward being content-driven. Teachers who operate in these settings often feel the tension between a focus on content and a focus on language. An urgent question that therefore needs to be addressed is to what extent reading can (be facilitated to) allow L2 learners to achieve multiple goals rather than one single goal. This question is complicated by second language acquisition (SLA) research findings suggesting that neither are comprehension and acquisition synonymous (Gass & Selinker, 2001) nor are meaning-based and grammatically based use of language (Swain, 1985).

Thus, in response to the complexity of the issue, and also in the spirit of promoting a symbiotic relationship between diverse conceptual and pedagogical practices, this volume attempts to cross the boundaries, so to speak, by bringing together the three perspectives on L2 reading research and instruction. Contributors to this volume are seasoned researchers who have examined reading from one of these angles and who, collectively, will tackle the following questions, among others: Should L2 reading instruction be comprehension-oriented, or should it be language-oriented? What types of knowledge and skills are necessary for improving reading comprehension? What elements of language can be learned through reading? Is it possible to integrate grammar training into comprehension training? If so, how may that be achieved in the classroom? As a secondary goal, this volume seeks to bridge the oft-noted gap between research and practice. This book is intended for L2 reading researchers, teachers, curriculum developers, materials writers, and graduate students of second language education interested in L2 reading.

## **T**HE CONTEXT

Reading plays a pivotal role in the life of L2 learners; reading is not only an important literacy skill that must be acquired for functional purposes, but it is also a necessary (if not sufficient) means by which learn-

ers develop a linguistic competence in an L2 (cf. Krashen, 1993), a competence that can subserve all other communicative skills, including, but not limited to, listening, speaking, and writing. This dual purpose sets L2 reading apart from L1 reading and underscores the complexity of L2 reading and instruction. Compounding this complexity are also two noteworthy facts about L2 learners: First, most learners, as Shiotsu (this volume) notes, “start to read in the second language before achieving the kind of grammatical maturity and the level of oral vocabulary that L1 readers attain before they begin to read” (p. 16). Second, they have varying experiences in reading in a prior language whose writing systems might bear unequal similarities to that of the target language (TL). Both realities have implications for the process and outcome of L2 reading and, hence, for instruction.

L2 reading instruction has traditionally been focused either on the literacy dimension (i.e., is comprehension-oriented), influenced largely by L1 research, or on the language dimension, as has research. To date, the two research paradigms have shown little crossover (cf. Grabe, 2005a; Horst, this volume). Nevertheless, it is becoming increasingly clear that a separation in instruction and research of the otherwise two interrelated dimensions is counterproductive to L2 learning: A focus on reading as a literacy skill dictates a functional emphasis on reading for efficient and effective textual comprehension. A focus on reading as a vehicle of language development, on the other hand, treats reading as a source of input for learners to intake linguistic information about the target language and calls for instructional attention to the psycholinguistic processes of representation and access. These two foci are not always compatible and may result in conflicting pedagogical recommendations (Han & D’Angelo, this volume).

The two foci need not be separate, however, at least as far as instruction is concerned. Indeed, in the history of L2 instruction, there have been attempts to fuse them. Krashen has recommended since the early 1980s that learners be exposed to large numbers of L2 comprehensible written texts as the means for achieving both goals, comprehension and acquisition. He argues that comprehension-based reading may *ipso facto* lead to language acquisition. However, this view, known as the Input Hypothesis (Krashen, 1982), has been the target of an array of criticisms from nearly all quarters of SLA research (see, e.g., Sharwood Smith, 1986; Swain, 1985; White, L., 1987). Evidence has been brought to bear that comprehension and acquisition are not synonymous (e.g., Genesee, 1987; Harley & Swain, 1984; Lightbown & Spada, 1990; Swain & Lapkin, 1982, 1989) and that learners have a natural tendency to prioritize semantic processing over syntactic pro-

cessing (Kowal & Swain, 1997; VanPatten, 1996; Williams, 2001). Therefore, a comprehension-exclusive approach, in some sense, reinforces the learner's propensity to read for comprehension and not to read for acquisition. Observations have shown that learners trained with a comprehension-exclusive approach typically develop superior comprehension skills but little linguistic knowledge (Harley & Swain, 1984).

Amendments have subsequently been sought to the comprehensible input model. Researchers have found, among other things, that a focus-on-form approach (Long, 1991), which integrates incidental but overt attention to form in otherwise exclusively meaning-based instruction (see, e.g., Leeman et al., 1995), may benefit both comprehension and acquisition. A recent study by Rodgers (2006), for instance, provided compelling evidence that such an approach may lead to growth in both content knowledge and linguistic abilities. Rodgers' research, however, has also revealed a challenge: The students in the study demonstrated much development in knowledge of content but much less development in functional linguistic abilities. Moreover, some of the linguistic forms that were targeted by the instructors (e.g., prepositions) showed no improvement at all. It thus appears that content-based instruction, when combined with a focus on form, may still be inadequate for linguistic development.

A related, though less obvious, concern is whether or not the focus-on-form approach compromises comprehension. On this issue Rodgers' (2006) study (and for that matter, most extant studies) has shed little light, due to its methodological limitation—the study assumed a within-group design and did not include a comparison group that would only have had content-based instruction to allow for a comparison of comprehension, both in terms of quantity and quality. Indeed, in general, it is still typical of these kinds of focus-on-form studies to not measure and/or compare comprehension (cf. Han, Park, & Combs, in press; Grabe, this volume). Nonetheless, it is clear that until comprehension and linguistic abilities are both measured and compared, there will continue to be a lack of an empirical basis for arguing for one approach over another.

## **L**ITERACY-ORIENTED L1 AND L2 RESEARCH

Literacy-oriented research in both L1 and L2 reading is marked by a dichotomy. There is a clear distinction between research related to whole language instruction and skills instruction. Traditionally, whole language instruction has also been identified as a top-down approach to reading, while skills

instruction has been identified as a bottom-up approach (see Anderson, N., 2008).

Proponents of whole language instruction argue that readers build meaning from the integration of textual information and background knowledge. The reader is searching for meaning and selectively reacts to print to confirm or reject the predictions that are made. Segalowitz, Poulsen, and Komoda (1991) point out that this higher level is concerned primarily with integration of textual information and includes resolving ambiguities in the text, linking words with their co-referents, integrating propositional units across sentences, generating and updating a schema or representation of the text as a whole, and integrating textual information with prior knowledge.

A major advocate of whole language reading instruction is Goodman, K. (1973, 1976). One line of early reading research carried out by Goodman (1967) was from a psycholinguistic perspective via qualitative methods. A method that he developed to examine reading is miscue analysis. By studying oral reading miscues, or unexpected responses to text, Goodman developed a theory of reading that holds that reading is a process of constructing meaning from text by using background knowledge, psychological strategies (including sampling, predicting and inferring, confirming and integrating), and linguistic cues from three systems—graphophonic, syntactic, and semantic. More recently, this research has been extended to include eye movement data (Paulson & Freeman, 2003). In these eye movement miscue analysis (EMMA) studies, subjects read and retell complete texts. By combining data from eye fixations with oral language miscues, researchers can better infer readers' use of psychological strategies, such as prediction, and their use of linguistic cues.

Not all research on whole language instruction uses qualitative methods. A good example is a report by Purcell-Gates, Duke, and Martineau (2007), which uses an experimental study design to examine the roles of explicit teaching and authentic experience in children's ability to read and write genre-specific text. In this study, the children read and wrote science informational and procedural texts. For example, after visiting a nature preserve, the children read a letter from the director of the preserve inviting them to write a brochure that would answer questions children have about plants and animals in a brochure. Then, the children worked in groups to write a brochure. As the authors note, this study addresses the debate regarding how content language forms are best learned. Some hold the belief that secondary discourses (Gee, 1992), such as the language of science, can only be implicitly learned. Others argue that specific genres should be taught explicitly. Results of the study showed no effect for explicit instruction on reading

and writing growth for six of seven outcomes. However, there was a strong relationship between growth in reading and writing and task authenticity. This study supports the practice of engaging children in authentic reading and writing tasks for the development of academic language.

The alternative to the whole language approach to teaching L2 reading is a skill-based approach. Much of the current L1 and L2 reading research that drives most instructional practice is research grounded in cognitive theory. A skill-based approach to reading typically consists of lower-level reading processes. Students start with the basics of letter and sound recognition, which, in turn, allows for morpheme recognition followed by word recognition, building up to the identification of grammatical structures, sentences, and longer texts. Letters, letter clusters, words, phrases, sentences, longer texts, and meaning is the order in achieving comprehension.

An important early study that examined the variables that account for reading proficiency was Stanovich's (1986) synthesis of research. The variable or skill that Stanovich found to account for much of the difference between good and poor readers was phonemic awareness, the ability to perceive and manipulate the individual phonemes or sounds of spoken words. This study was influential in shaping current reading instructional policy with an early emphasis on teaching phonemic awareness.

In the United States, research that examined the separate skills involved in reading, such as phonemic awareness, received support from government grants administered through the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD). In 1997 the NICHD convened a National Reading Panel (NRP) consisting primarily of cognitive scientists to conduct a meta-analysis of research in the teaching of reading. The panel elected to limit research studies to those that were experimental or quasi-experimental in design. Only these studies were considered scientific research. They examined five areas of reading research that had studies that met their criteria: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension (Fang, 2008; Fang & Schleppegrell, 2008; National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000). These have come to be known as the "fab 5" among teachers and researchers engaged in reading instruction and research.

This panel report was summarized and widely distributed to schools. The fab 5 have become the five pillars of reading instruction for both native English speakers and language learners (ELLs) in most schools in the United States. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2002 requires students to make progress in reading as measured by standardized tests based on the five areas the NRP studied.

Pressley (2006), however, argues that the whole language and skills approaches represent the extremes and that “either extreme misses the mark” (p. 11). Pressley is a great advocate of what is known as a balanced approach to the teaching of reading. This approach draws on elements of both whole language and skills approaches. His work has involved examining effective classrooms, effective schools, and effective literacy programs. He points out “the classrooms where reading and writing seem to be developing best are ones in which there is a lot of coverage of skills and a great deal of teacher support as children apply the skills they are learning to the reading of excellent literature and to writing” (p. 427).

It appears, therefore, that within the context of L1 reading research, although there are debates about whether a whole language approach or a skills approach to reading development is better, it is the combination of both that results in the most effective reading instruction.

The same issues that are part of L1 reading research exist in L2 reading (Anderson, N., 2008; Grabe & Stoller, 2002). Moreover, according to a report of the National Literacy Panel (NLP) (August & Shanahan, 2006), there is relatively little research on L2 reading, there were more studies on word-level skills than on text-level skills, and there was “little or no difference between the performance of language-minority students and their native-speaking peers on measures of word reading accuracy” (p. 61). August and Shanahan (2006) argue that the same factors that influence L1 reading—phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension—should guide L2 literacy instruction.

The NLP report includes a section with studies of sociocultural contexts and literacy development. These studies examine factors such as immigration, discourse differences between home and school, parents and families, language policies, and language status. One conclusion August and Shanahan (2006) reach is that attempts to bridge the home-school differences in interaction can “enhance students’ engagement and level of participation in classroom instruction” (p. 256). Other factors seemed less important, although language policies and language status are shown to affect student self-concept and reading achievement.

The report also includes studies that examine crosslinguistic relationships in L2 reading. As August and Shanahan (2006) point out, “The majority of studies . . . have investigated cross-language relationships with reference to one of two theoretical orientations: the contrastive analysis hypothesis (Lado, 1964) and the interdependence hypothesis (Cummins, 1978, 1979)” (p. 154). The authors caution that reading is complex and that neither transfer nor interdependence alone can account for L2 reading.

Both are important, but other factors, such as differences among languages and the development of oral proficiency in an L2, also come into play.

The studies that were examined point to the importance of students' developing high levels of L1 literacy for L2 literacy achievement. For example, the studies that examined cross-language relationships in word reading suggested that aspects of word knowledge, such as cognates in related languages, transfer across languages. The NLP report also identified a significant correlation between L1 and L2 comprehension. Students with higher levels of comprehension in their L1s attained higher levels of comprehension in reading an L2 than those with low levels of L1 comprehension. Metacognitive reading strategies also appeared to transfer across languages.

Although the NLP report is heavily weighted toward experimental research and a view of reading as a set of skills whose subcomponents can be analyzed separately, it also includes a number of studies that take a more holistic view of reading and use qualitative methods. The report includes both social and cognitive factors involved in reading.

As with Pressley's research in L1 reading, Anderson, N. (2008) argues that a balanced or integrated approach to L2 reading is also appropriate. Such an approach requires a synergy of elements of a whole language approach, a skills approach, and an acquisition approach to teaching and researching.

## **T**HE ORGANIZATION OF THIS VOLUME

This volume has four chapters on research and four on instruction and concludes with an epilogue. Each chapter ends with a list of reflection questions for use in courses or for self-reflection.

Part 1 opens with an empirical study by Toshihiko Shiotsu that examines the relationship between word recognition and reading proficiency, taking as its premise that skilled deployment of lower-level processes may free up attentional resources for higher-order processes such as inferencing, which lead to better comprehension. Two hundred and nineteen Japanese EFL learners were given four test tasks that measure the latency of visual orthographic processing and lexical semantic access, passage comprehension, and sentence comprehension speed. Based on their reading ability as demonstrated on the last two tests, the participants were divided into two proficiency groups. Statistical analyses of their orthographic processing and lexical semantic access speed suggest that extensive reading activities may provide for ease of word recognition, including familiarity with ortho-



graphic regularities. Shiotsu recommends that classroom practice aimed at developing learners' word recognition fluency should entail both form and meaning recognition.

Chapter 2 addresses reading as a source of vocabulary acquisition. Drawing on three identified benefits of extensive reading—comprehensible input, modified input, and focus-on-form—as its theoretical basis, Marlise Horst's research addressed two questions: (1) To what extent do learners learn and retain meaning of previously unknown words as a result of participating in a program of extensive reading? and (2) Do learners recognize frequently met words more quickly than comparable words that have been met less frequently? Forty-seven adult, intermediate ESL learners with various L1 backgrounds served as subjects. While all of them were invited to participate in a five-week, after-school extensive reading program that provided a mini-library of graded readers for students to freely choose from, 29 of them read one book or more; the rest of the students did not read anything. Overall, the results indicate that the five-week reading program allowed the readers to develop knowledge of infrequent words as well as fluency in making form-meaning connections, particularly for words that made frequent appearances in the books they had selected to read.

Chapter 3 explores the differential vocabulary gains of students from reading. Diana Pulido reviews research on reader-based factors and their impact on reading and vocabulary growth. The existing research has robustly shown that three learner-related factors best predict vocabulary learning via reading: background knowledge, passage sight vocabulary, and general L2 reading proficiency. Thus, the more learners possess with regard to these, the more words they are able to acquire through reading (i.e., text comprehension). Simply put, the rich get richer—to use Stanovich's concept of what is known as the Matthew effect.

Chapter 4 reviews SLA research on three types of text modification: simplification, enhancement, and glossing. A long-held belief among many researchers and practitioners is that textual modification facilitates comprehension, and for some, this facilitates acquisition. Ronald Leow's review challenges this assumption. With regard to text simplification, research has offered mixed evidence on its effect on comprehension, but little evidence that it promotes intake, the initial process of language acquisition. Likewise, empirical findings concerning textual enhancement are inconsistent (cf. Han, Park, & Combs, 2008). On the other hand, research has quite consistently shown that glossing facilitates comprehension and incidental vocabulary learning. Based on the extant research, Leow offers a number of pedagogical suggestions, stressing the need to promote noticing and aware-

ness through multiple opportunities for learners to repeatedly encounter linguistic forms in context.

In Part 2 on instruction-related issues, Chapter 5 highlights reading as a universal process. David Freeman and Yvonne Freeman make two recommendations for teachers. First, instruction should strive to capitalize on learners' L1 reading proficiency. In the event that such proficiency is absent, it should be built by "teaching reading in a student's primary language" (p. 103). Second, a socio-psycholinguistic approach should be used that strengthens the universal process. By way of illustration, Freeman and Freeman describe two classroom scenarios to contrast the socio-psycholinguistic approach, which is holistic in nature, with the skills approach that emphasizes discrete and decontextualized decoding skills.

Chapter 6 by Neil Anderson presents the research basis for ACTIVE, a pedagogical approach he proposed for L2 reading instruction that focuses on comprehension. This approach has six components: Activate prior knowledge, Cultivate vocabulary, Think about comprehension, Increase reading rate, Verify reading strategies, and Evaluate progress. For each of the components of the framework, Anderson briefly reviews its research basis and offers practical suggestions. For activating prior knowledge, he suggests three pre-reading strategies: creating and having students fill out an anticipation guide, discussing text type and structure, and using titles of the reading passages to elicit predictions. For cultivating vocabulary, he suggests using both direct and indirect strategies to deal respectively with vocabulary items prior to and during reading, including teaching word structure analysis skills. With regard to thinking about comprehension, Anderson suggests getting students to formulate their own questions, asking students to summarize what they have read, and asking students to question the author. For increasing reading rate, he recommends "rate buildup" reading, repeated reading, class-paced reading, and self-paced reading. To verify reading strategies, he suggests asking students to produce verbal reports and think-aloud protocols. To assess progress, he recommends the use of reading logs, reading rate graphs, reading rate records, and records of repeated reading.

Chapter 7 by Tom Cobb discusses the role of computers in L2 reading instruction, with specific reference to vocabulary building. He first presents a computer-based analysis of the learning task and difficulty confronting L2 readers, concluding that learning to read in an L2 is different from learning to read in the L1, particularly in terms of (a) the rate of vocabulary acquisition, (b) the coverage of the vocabulary acquired, and (c) lexical access. Cobb then introduces web-based programs that may help to overcome these

deficiencies. These programs may (a) offer large amounts and varieties of reading to help close or prevent gaps in high-coverage lexical zones; (b) help choose reading texts to maximize learners' skill development, vocabulary growth, and pleasure; (c) help create dedicated word frequency lists for particular reading objectives; (d) help speed up the acquisition of new words; (e) help generate contextualized word frequency to enrich word knowledge; and (f) facilitate transfer of word knowledge to novel contexts.

Chapter 8 addresses the issue of how to balance comprehension and acquisition in instruction. Drawing on L2 acquisition research, ZhaoHong Han and Amy D'Angelo argue that a comprehension-exclusive approach to reading instruction may lead to skewed development in the L2 such that learners may be able to comprehend texts but still be weak in linguistic competence. They subsequently propose a pedagogical approach, dubbed the "dual approach," to allow reciprocity between comprehension-based (semantic) processing and language-based (syntactic) processing. The instruction begins by teaching reading for comprehension, including teaching skills for achieving comprehension and for increasing efficiency. Once basic comprehension is in place, the instructor then draws learners' attention to certain linguistic forms and helps learners detect form-meaning mapping relations in context, using strategies such as input enhancement (Sharwood Smith, 1993), processing instruction (VanPatten, 1996), and narrow reading (Krashen, 1981).

Bill Grabe provides an epilogue synthesizing how the chapters meet a growing need for understanding L2 reading ability and reading instruction. Grabe emphasizes the importance of the connection between theory and practice, a central theme in this volume. He then outlines ten components that help educators understand how reading comprehension functions (letter-sound correspondences, lexical access, a large vocabulary, morphological information, syntactic processing, forming meaning units, connecting main ideas to build a text model of reading, building a situation model of the text, directing attention and executive control, and processing concepts). He also identifies eight common themes across multiple chapters in the book (the L2 reader, the component skills for reading, a large recognition vocabulary, extensive reading, fluency and automaticity of processing, strategic instruction and the importance of strategic reading, the role of background knowledge, and finally, instructional applications). Grabe concludes by highlighting three issues that deserve further attention to increase our understanding of L2 reading, and these are (a) the roles of fluency development, motivation, and content and language integrated instruc-

tion, (b) the need for additional experimental and qualitative research, and (c) the relationship between reading comprehension and second language acquisition.

## **S**HARED UNDERSTANDINGS

This volume provides a window into the diversity of conceptions on L2 reading and instruction. Some researchers view reading as isomorphic with comprehension itself an end, while others deem reading (and comprehension) a means to an end. Nevertheless, it is clear that regardless of their epistemological differences, researchers do have some shared understandings. They all believe that comprehension should be the primary goal of reading instruction; that vocabulary is essential to text comprehension; that vocabulary is best acquired through frequent encounters with words in multiple contexts; that skilled word recognition frees up mental resources for performing higher-order comprehension processes such as predicting and inferring, confirming and/or disconfirming predictions, and integrating new information with previous ideas; and that extensive reading develops efficiency in lexical and orthographic processing.

However, this volume exposes a wide array of issues for future research to resolve. One set of issues concerns whether there is a tradeoff between speed reading and comprehension, whether there is a tradeoff between speed and input processing, and whether speed reading should be promoted across the board given that the goal of communicative language teaching is to develop learners who can utilize a variety of skills for a variety of communicative purposes. A second set of issues relates to the teaching of word recognition skills. For example, should they be taught in context (e.g., during reading) or in isolation (e.g., before reading)? A third concerns the role of text modification, in particular, text simplification. According to Leow's review, simplified texts aid, in some cases, in comprehension, but not acquisition. Given this, should texts be simplified for L2 readers? A fourth set of issues relates to whether a whole language approach is good for both comprehension and acquisition. Does it encourage use of nonlinguistic means more than linguistic means in achieving comprehension? Does it lead to early stabilization of interlanguage? An equally contentious set of issues revolves around the role of the L1 in learning to read in an L2. Does L1 reading proficiency facilitate or hinder L2 reading proficiency? Should transfer be encouraged from the L1 to the L2? Does an emphasis on universal processes overlook language-specific reading processes? Can learners without literacy

in the L1 learn to read in an L2 directly? What are the consequences of L1 transfer for L2 comprehension and acquisition? These issues, we hope, will constitute a point of departure for future collaboration between researchers of different orientations, in particular, of the three described (i.e., whole language, skills, and acquisition).

With a recognition of the dual potential of L2 reading comes the need to re-conceptualize L2 reading instruction: Rather than stressing one at the expense of the other, instruction should aim to develop learners' reading proficiency as well as their linguistic competency. In this light, the traditional boundaries separating a literacy-oriented paradigm from an acquisition-oriented paradigm are no longer tenable; rather, researchers from both camps must come together to create a common empirical basis for instruction.

This volume is a preliminary attempt to cross the research boundaries. Its goal is to garner existing insights but, more important, to foreshadow issues for future research on the dual dimension of L2 reading. It is our hope that this initial attempt will arouse interest in L2 reading researchers and instructors in following up on the many ideas, insights, and issues discussed in the book by subjecting them to all kinds of empirical investigations (experimental, quasi-experimental, and observational) (cf. Grabe, this volume). On a more global level, we would like to call on empirical research to clarify, in precise terms, the relationship between comprehension and grammar and the relationship between comprehension and vocabulary. The existing literature has been fuzzy and is therefore not quite helpful on these issues. The existing studies are mostly *post facto*, using test results for correlational analysis. Although the field may, as a consequence, be content with the notion of "reciprocal causality," a clear understanding of the relationships can be crucial for any instructional attempt to fulfill the dual potential of L2 reading. For one thing, an understanding of the extent to which grammar contributes to comprehension (or vice versa) may aid in decision-making on how to counterbalance comprehension and grammar in order for both to develop robustly in L2 learners.