

The Impact of Reading on Second Language Learning

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Reading Research
Quarterly

Fall 1983



Participants & Research Design



- **ESL instruction begins in Class 3 with 8 year olds**
- **Little outside influence factors**
- **Sample of 380 students**
 - **ages 9-11**
 - **Classes 4 and 5**
 - **Twelve rural schools**
 - **24 teachers**
 - **Control groups totaled 234 pupils**

Differentiating Factors Between L1 & L2 Learning in Contexts

Strength of
motivation

Emphasis on
meaning vs.
form

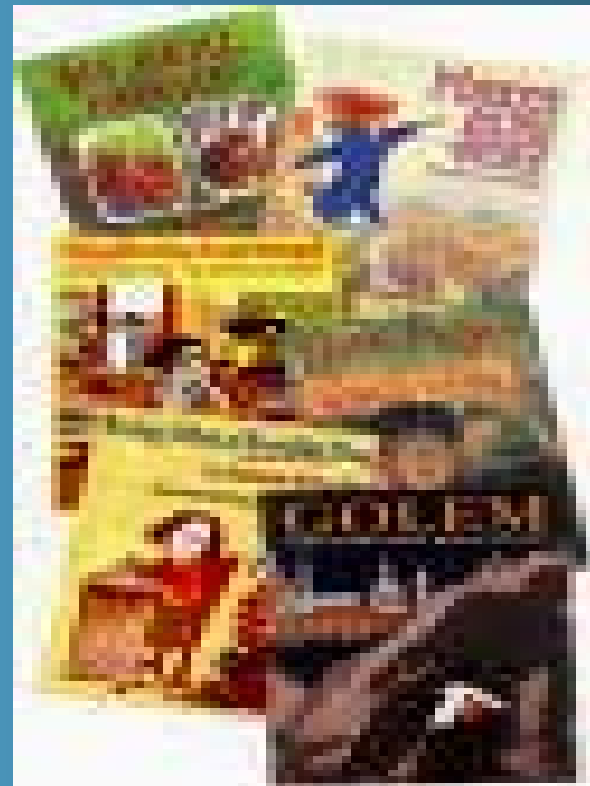
Amount of exposure
to language

Type of exposure
to language

The quality
of models

Key Feature of Reading Program

Extensive use
of high-
interest
illustrated
story books



Three Language Programs

Control: Tate Oral English Syllabus	Sustained Silent Reading	Shared Book Experience
No new books Teachers given 1 day retraining session in usual audio- lingual program	“Book-Flood” Teachers provided written outline and explanation of lesson procedures	“Book-Flood” Teachers given 3 day workshop Instruction provided in high- interest story reading & follow-up activities

Contrasts & Hypotheses

- **One: Compare “Book Flood” initiatives in classrooms with classrooms receiving previously established instruction methods**
 - exposure to large numbers of story books will improve general language competencies
- **Two: Compare Shared Reading method with Sustained Silent Reading method**
 - Share Reading method is more persistent & consistent way to expose a new language

Timeline of Book Flood Project

	Feb.	March	Apr.- Oct.	Nov.
Shared Book Experience	Pretests	3 day workshop	250 books supplied	Posttests
Silent Reading Group	Pretests	No workshop	250 books supplied	Posttests
Control Group	Pretests	1 day workshop	No extra books	Posttests

Shared Reading Experience Method

Day 1

Select book.

Lead brief shared discussion.

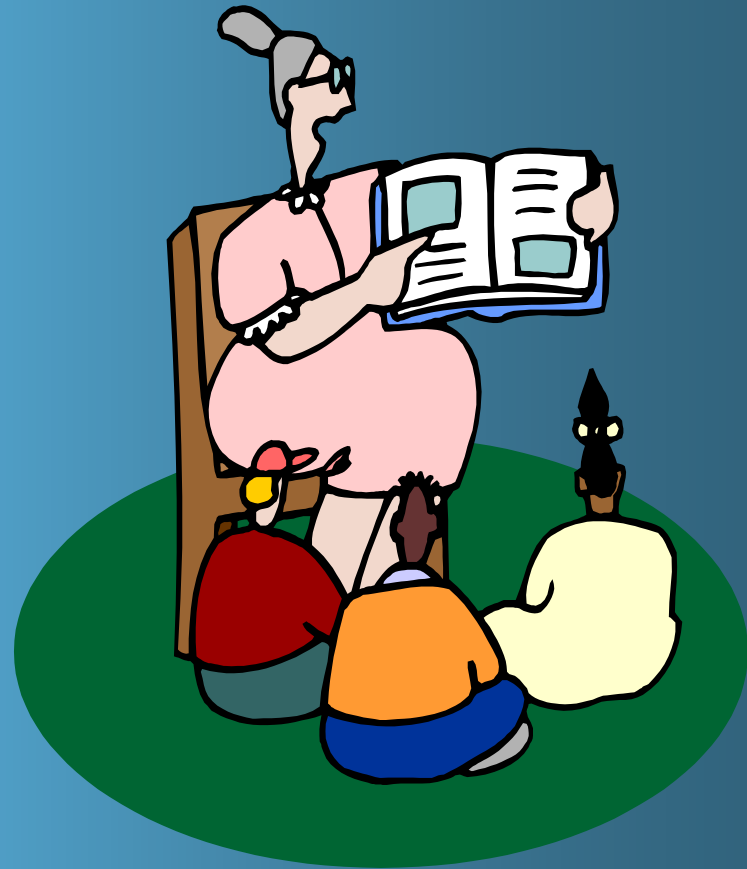
Read all or some of book.

Day 2 or 3

Reread or continue story.

Expand shared discussion.

Follow-up with activities.



Silent Reading Method



- Display books attractively.
- Read aloud to class regularly.
- Establish a daily time of Sustained Silent Reading (20-30 minutes)

Control Group

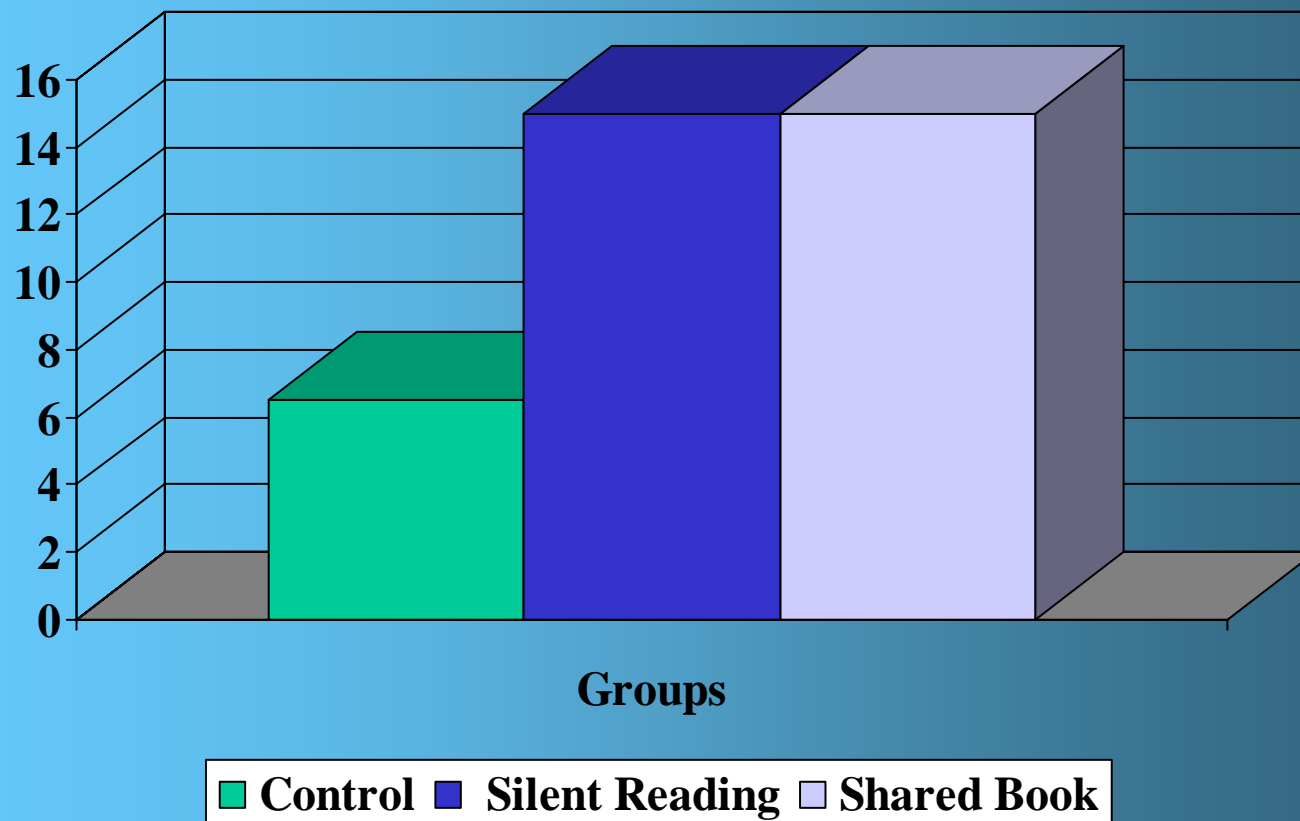
- Provide two 15-min. lessons each day
- Follow the Tate Oral English Syllabus
- Use accompanying book series to provided practice and reinforcement of lessons



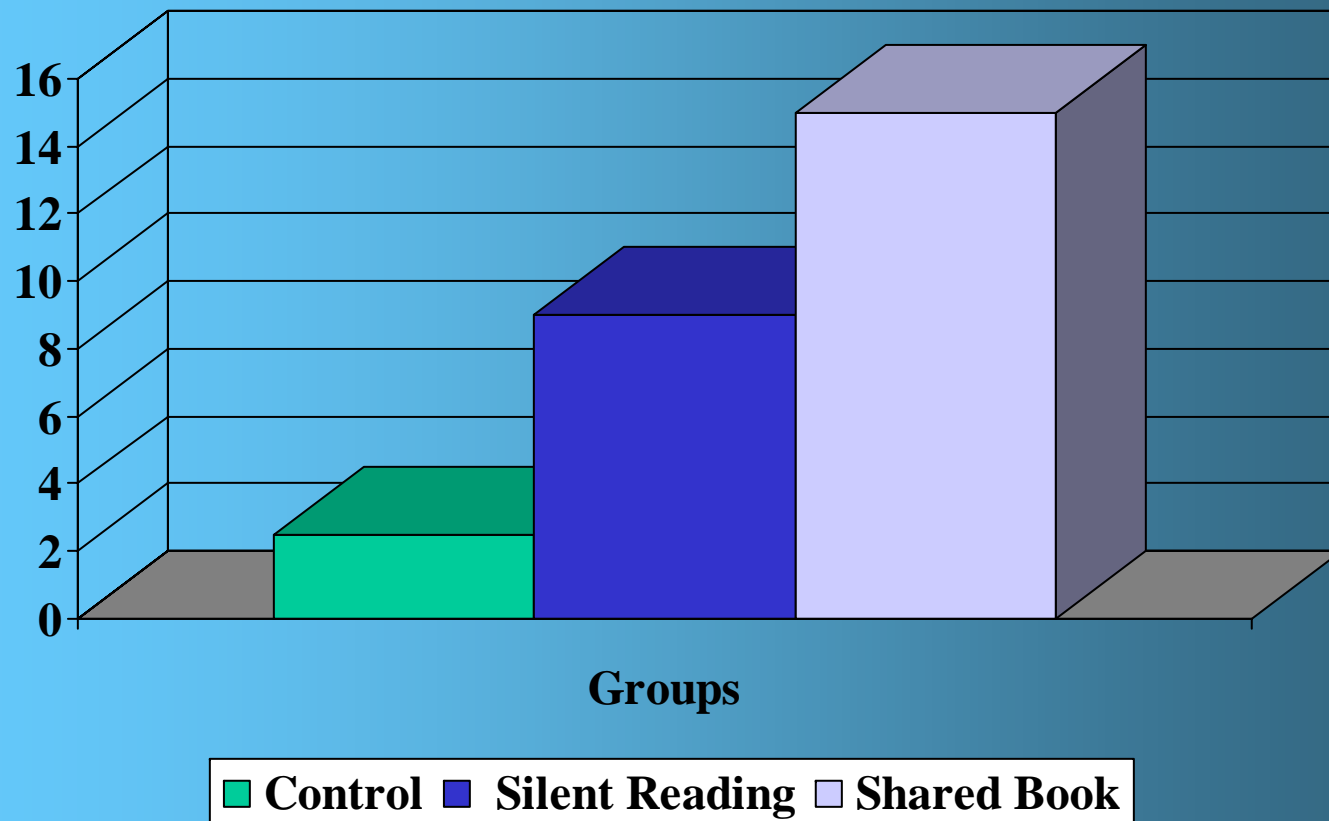
Human Variables

- One teacher in control group read to her class daily, in addition to the using the Tate Oral English Syllabus.
- Another teacher in the Shared Reading group did not follow through with methodology.
- Several teachers were replaced while on leave for periods up to ten weeks.

Class Four Reading Gains



Class Five Reading Gains



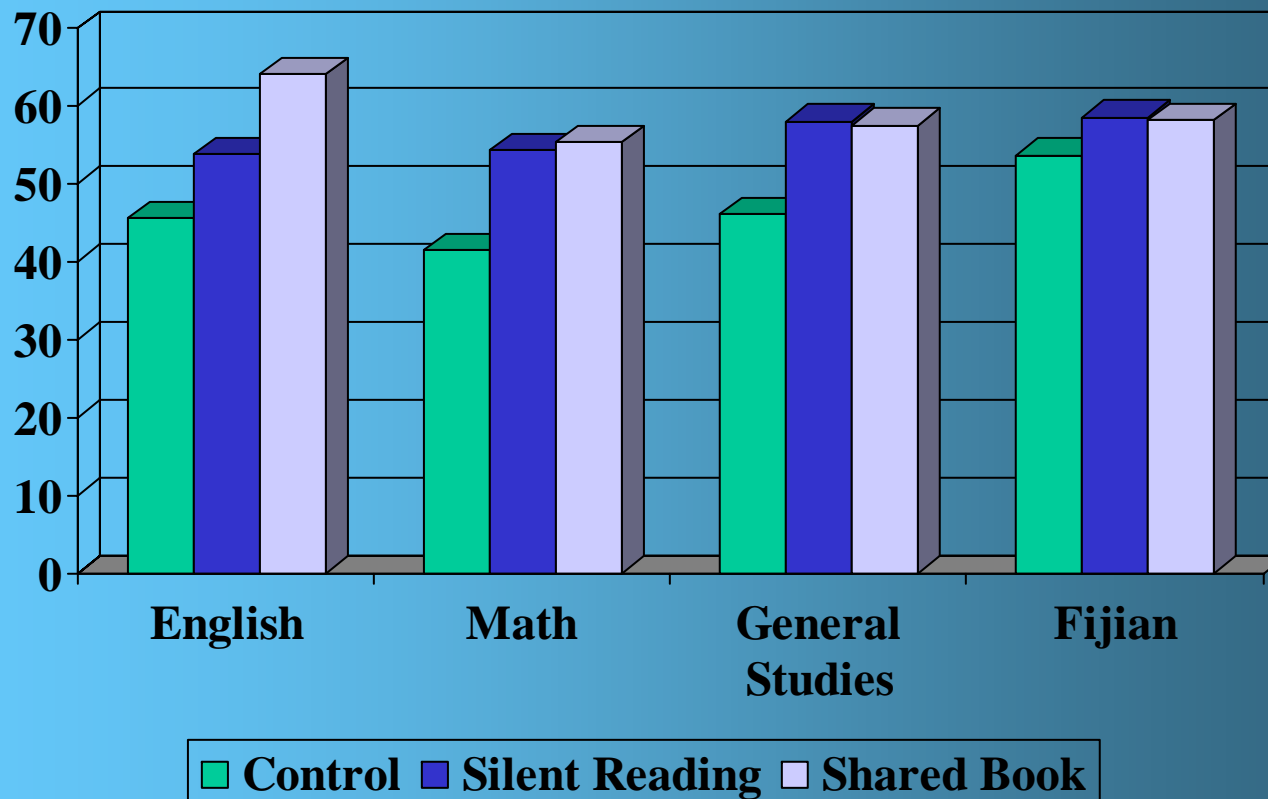
Mean Residuals for Total Scores Showing Progress in 1981

Class 5					
Control		Silent Reading		Shared Book	
School	M	School	M	School	M
T	-1.70	S	5.93	V	-2.23
S	-5.72	C	-0.79	N	7.93
S	-3.46	R	6.36	SD	2.72
K	-3.11	B	-0.55	K	0.47
Totals	-3.73		3.03		2.23

Class Six Mean Residuals for Total Scores in 1981

Control		Silent Reading		Shared Book	
School	M	School	M	School	M
†	-1.19	§	-1.95	∇	7.25
N	-1.10	C	11.08	N	6.73

Mean Percentage Marks for Fiji Intermediate Examinations Class Six, 1981



Critical Factors to Obtain Improvement

- **Greater and repeated exposure to print in high-interest contexts, in conditions where students were striving for meaning, and receiving sufficient support to achieve it regularly**





Children can learn new structures from relatively uncontrolled materials, provided there is support of cues from pictures, absorbing content, and teacher guidance.

Formula for Raising Literacy Standards in L2 Situations

- Imported books are still effective in "hooking kids on to the reading habit
- Provide students with a range of suitable, well-illustrated, high-interest story books and allow time to read them



