Transcriptions

Participant #1

When I was a third or fourth grade elementary school student, I started reading English storybooks. The first book I read was a story about (small pause) animals. That storybook was bought by my mom…Actually, I only understood some parts of that story, and I could understand the sentences but not vocabularies. I think that when I understand the vocabularies, the grammar structures are not problems at all. Also, it is more interesting if I can recognize those vocabularies.

In the reading class at our school now, the teacher often asks us to read each paragraph of a new story first. And then, the teacher will explain the vocabularies which include in each paragraph. As for the grammar, (small pause) she will remind us of certain sentences we need to pay more attention to…. Besides teacher’s explanation, when I encounter a new vocabulary, I won’t check the dictionary immediately; instead, I keep reading the following sentences to get the potential meaning of that word. In addition, I have a Chinese grammar textbook to help me understand those complex sentences.

During my free time, I would like to read English stories because I think they are interesting and with some logic at the same time. Also, when reading a story, I imagine myself as one of the characters in the story. In that way, I will increase the interest to read English stories. Although I think vocabularies and grammar might influence my reading comprehension, I don’t think it’s hard for me to read English stories. From those stories, I can learn some background knowledge, too. (Small pause) Recently, my teacher asks us to rewrite a story into a short play, and reading the English story is very useful (small pause) especially for describing the characters of the roles and writing performers’ lines. I learn a lot of vocabularies by English stories, and reading English stories is just like a springboard for me to understand other English articles. Therefore, I think reading English stories is helpful for my reading ability.

Participant #2

I started to learn English when I was three years old. At first, the teacher read out the English story for us, and every student needed to follow the schedule of reading…. I didn’t think it was hard for me to read those stories, and the level of difficulty of the stories was not that high, too.

Now, during the reading class, the teacher will explain vocabularies and sentences after reading the story…. However, when I read English stories by myself, I often skip those vocabularies that I don’t understand, and finally, I will get a clearer picture automatically after finishing the story. Therefore, I seldom check the dictionary unless the teacher assigns some homework. Actually, the function of the dictionary is limited. Sometimes I can’t find out the word I need to check, and the Chinese translation of the word seems not very correct and suitable in some cases.

Reading English stories is not difficult for me, but when I have some problems in
reading them, I will ask my dad, teachers or the English tutor… If my mom doesn’t ask me to read English stories, I will read Chinese novels instead of English stories in my leisure time… I think I learn some background knowledge from English stories, and it can be used to write the play. But unless there are sequels of the English storybook, I don’t think the background knowledge can be linked to other stories… In fact, I will improve my reading ability by reading English stories, and I am able to read storybooks faster, and understand the content easily. Although I think reading English stories is not really interesting, it is useful.

Participant #3

The first time that I started to read an English storybook, was probably in my second year of the elementary school. At that time, I had not learned English yet, and there were full of unfamiliar vocabularies [in that English storybook]…. Therefore, I kept checking the dictionary, and wrote down the Chinese definition of each vocabulary. In fact, I read this storybook because I had watched the film, which was adaptation of the story.

Usually, the teacher doesn’t explain the vocabulary and grammar first; instead, the teacher will explain only if there are some new vocabularies appearing. Most of the time, the explanations from the teacher help me to read easily, especially the vocabulary part. When reading an English story by myself, I often keep reading in order to figure out the meaning of the new vocabulary; unless I fail, I won’t check the dictionary or ask adults.

I think the barrier to understand the vocabulary, grammar, and the main idea of the English story is not a problem to me. [However] sometimes I need the teacher to assist me with the vocabularies. I will read English stories when I have some leisure time, (small pause) feel bored, and have bad mood; but usually, I would rather read Chinese books. In my opinion, the background knowledge I learn from English stories is useful, and it can be linked to a similar story. In addition, reading English stories is just an initiation into other English books, and it also improves my reading comprehension ability.

Participant #4

When I was a third grade elementary school student, I started to read English stories…. Although the story was picked by me, I didn’t understand the story due to the influence of the vocabulary and grammar.

The teacher will explain the vocabulary and grammar to us, but as for the assistance, (small pause) I can understand the meaning [of vocabulary and grammar]. Actually, when having some problems with reading, I often go and ask my parents, and I check the dictionary as soon as I encounter unfamiliar vocabularies [during reading]. In addition, I read English stories because (small pause) I am too bored.

I don’t think to read English stories is difficult, and I can understand stories by dictionary or teacher’s explanations. Moreover, reading English stories are very interesting (small laugh), and I want to keep reading. I can learn the background knowledge, and take that knowledge to another English story in order to understand it. As for the reading comprehension ability, I think the effect is positive because I can understand books that I had never read before, and
there are some possibilities that I will link [the content] to the next book. Therefore, English stories are interesting, and I enjoy reading stories.

**Participant #5**

I remember that I started to read English stories when I was about a third grade elementary school student. I read that English storybook because book cover of it seems [that the story is] interesting. However, it was too difficult for me to understand the vocabulary and grammar. Therefore, (small pause) I couldn’t get the main idea of that story.

The teacher won’t explain the vocabulary and grammar at the beginning, and she just read through the whole story. Also, we use the highlighter to make any sentences or vocabularies, which we don’t understand. I will check the dictionary when having some problems of vocabularies, but actually I seldom read English stories. Really, I rarely read them unless the teacher asks us to do so.

Reading English stories isn’t difficult, and most of the time, I can check the dictionary to solve the problems [when reading stories]. However, I think the vocabulary and grammar might influence the comprehension of the English story. As for the effect of teacher’s assistances, the teacher just teaches the major part of the story, and we have to try to understand the details. In my free time, I won’t read English stories because we have a lot of English homework to do. When I finish all of the homework, I (small pause) don’t want to read more. I think reading English stories does not really increase my interest [to read them], and it all depends on the topic whether I like it or not…. Through English stories, I can learn some background knowledge, but it is useless when the new story doesn’t contain some vocabulary and grammar, which I learned before. I’m not sure whether or not reading English stories can increase reading comprehension ability because there are rarely some topics I like, but I think it can improve my vocabulary knowledge.

**Participant #6**

I read English stories when I (small pause) was four years old. I just understood partly, and I still needed to ask (stammer) my parents…. Because the story was not very difficult, I could get the main idea of the whole story.

When having reading class, the teacher will explain the vocabulary and grammar of an English story first. Moreover, the teacher will tell us what kinds of sentences are good. While reading an English story, I often check the dictionary or infer the meaning of a word according to the context. If there is something strange [of the word definition], I will ask the teacher.

I don’t think reading English stories is difficult. Sometimes the vocabulary and grammar will influence the comprehension toward the story, so we need the teacher to explain. If I have some leisure time, I will (stammer) read English stories because it is (stammer) my interest, and I want to (stammer) improve my English ability, too…. Actually, I have no interest in Chinese books. Besides, I can learn background knowledge, and link the vocabularies, which I learn from other English stories, to the next book. Moreover, I am used to writing (stammer)
a summary after finishing a story. In my opinion, reading English stories is helpful and interesting, and I like it.

Participant #7

I learned English when I was four years old, but I already read my first English story at three years old. Therefore, I couldn’t understand the English stories until I really learned English. In addition, those English stories often contained a lot of pictures, and I used the pictures to guess the meaning of the content at that time.

Sometimes the teacher asks us to preview some stories that she assigns, and we will discuss the stories in class. Otherwise we just choose the story we like, and read it. The most useful part of teacher’s explanation is the vocabulary, because a vocabulary item might have different meanings. In fact, I don’t care about the grammar too much, and once I understand the meaning of the vocabularies, there is no problem with the sentence. Therefore, I check the dictionary very often, and I can recognize which definition is appropriate [in the context]. To me, the purpose of reading English stories is to kill time.

Most sentences in English storybooks are already simplified with easy grammar, and I choose the stories according to my own English level, so it isn’t very difficult to read English stories, and I often take notes, too. Only when the context doesn’t show any hints to explain the meaning of one vocabulary or sentence, the influence [of the vocabulary and grammar] is obvious. I would like to read more English stories because there are still a lot of books [that I haven’t read], and most of the time, the brief introduction of the book is usually attractive. Besides, I will learn some background knowledge, and when reading the similar vocabularies, characters, and background, it is easier to understand without checking them repeatedly. In addition, reading English stories helps me to improve my reading ability, and it is fun.

Participant #8

I went to the bilingual kindergarten when I was about two or three years old…. The teacher there gave us a bunch of stories with lots of pictures and few words, and we learned vocabularies from those stories. Also, we could ask the Taiwanese teacher questions.

We read an English storybook now, and the teacher asks us to preview the storybook at home. During class, the teacher will ask us questions of vocabularies, and explain the grammar in the story. I think word definitions of the electronic dictionary are not exactly correct… and I will check Oxford English Electronic Dictionary or paper dictionary. When reading stories, I will (small laugh) skim over those pictures first, and then go back to check the meaning of the vocabularies…. The whole class will go to the library, and the teacher let each student choose one storybook as the homework. And then, we need to turn in the report papers. Therefore, in my free time, I would not like to read more English storybooks, and try to find something relaxing (small laugh). If I am in a good mood, and the topics are interesting to me, I might read stories for the reasons of learning and interest.

Reading English stories is not very difficult, but sometimes I feel distracted by the grammar and the familiarity of vocabularies, especially the key words. If I know the meanings
of the key words, I can understand the whole sentence, the whole page, and then the whole structure of that story. As for the grammar, it is important when taking tests. In my opinion, I think I learn some background knowledge from those stories, and the characters in the story can reflect my own virtues and weaknesses…. Also, the different backgrounds can provide different ideas, which can be expanded to other books or to real life…. Finally, I think reading English stories can help me to read faster, and get familiar [with English materials]. As we learn more and more vocabularies and grammar rules, we can comprehend the story and the development of it. I not only like to read English stories but enjoy reading them.

Participant #9

I started to read English stories when I was two or three years old. My mom is an English teacher, so she had asked me to read English storybooks [since I was very young]. Therefore, I sometimes read very fast (small laugh) in order to have some time to do things I liked. The only problem for me in reading was the difficulty of the vocabulary.

In the cram school, the teacher will record the whole story for us, and ask us to follow the tape, and write down unfamiliar vocabularies. The teacher teaches vocabularies based on those feedbacks, and he will reinforce our memory with the explanations. Usually I check dictionary or ask my mom when encountering some difficulties [in reading]. Only if one vocabulary keeps repeating, then I will check for the meaning. [In fact,] I read English stories with the half force and the half willingness. The reasons of willingness are to be in the fashion or to want to read the original text after watching some films.

Like Harry Potter, that is very, very difficult, but if I can understand three fourths of the story, it is easy…. In addition, I think that only the vocabularies will influence my understanding [of the content]. Actually, I (small pause) don’t want to read English stories in my leisure time, and it depends on my mood because when I don’t understand the vocabulary, I feel very short-tempered. [On the other hand,] when I can (small laugh) get the rewards [from adults] or have a good mood, I will be more likely to read stories…. In my opinion, I don’t think reading English stories will increase my interest in reading unless the story is interesting and with the sequels, such as Sherlock Holmes. Also, I don’t learn much background knowledge…and I won’t concentrate on the background of the story…. After all, different books are with different characters and settings. I think it would be an easier and effective way to improve reading ability at the beginning stage; however …it is meaningless if only the teacher teaches the story, and students just listen. Instead, to give us the opportunity to choose the story, and have the presentation is more helpful.

Participant #10

When I was six years old, I started reading English stories…. The storybooks which I read at that time contained a lot of pictures, and each English sentence was followed by a Chinese translation. Moreover, the English sentences were very simple. But, it was too hard for me to match the English word with the Chinese translation.

Often after reading a story, the teacher will explain the vocabularies and sentence
structures. Actually, I think I can read those English stories by myself. If I have some difficulties with the new vocabularies, I will skip them or just guess the meanings. On the other hand, if the vocabulary keeps appearing and influencing my understanding toward the story, I will check the dictionary.

We choose an English storybook and preview it at home by ourselves, so reading stories is not difficult for me. Also, I don’t think the vocabularies and grammar are the problems in reading stories, and I can check the vocabularies on my own. To be honest, I don’t read English storybooks or other English books in my free time. I usually read Chinese books, and I think they are more interesting [than English storybooks] (small laugh). When reading English storybooks, I have to check the dictionary which is painful, but reading Chinese ones is faster. Moreover, reading English storybooks doesn’t increase my interest in reading, unless there are the sequels [to the story I like]. In the case of background knowledge in the stories, I just skim the background of the story which is usually Western, and it doesn’t help a lot. Not every story can be connected together; besides, I don’t think the background of an English story is where the knowledge might come from…. [In conclusion,] reading English stories can help me to make a progress of my reading comprehension ability. If I can understand the story by the context, and speed up my reading rate…, I think my reading ability will improve.

Participant #11

I am eleven years old now, and I have studied English since I was in the bilingual kindergarten…. The first time that I read an English story was in my second year of the elementary school, and I hardly understood the story (small laugh).

We have an English reading course, and we just read through the story. The teacher only explains the main idea of the story and some difficult vocabularies, and he doesn’t introduce the sentences and grammar. In my opinion, the explanation from the teacher is not really useful, and (long pause) I don’t think I will have a deeper understanding toward the vocabularies. When I encounter some difficult vocabularies or grammar, I just ignore them, and I can get the main idea of the story at least. During class time, the teacher keeps teaching, and we are just in a daze (small laugh). The foreign teacher’s movements are very exaggerative …and I think he is very (small laugh) childish… and this course is very boring.

Reading English stories is not that difficult, and the story with some new vocabularies and grammar won’t influence my understanding. However, I don’t like to read English stories even in my free time, and I only want to read Chinese books. Moreover, I can’t learn any background knowledge from English stories. As for the progress in reading comprehension, …(long pause) I think the effect of reading English stories can only be obvious while reading some easy English materials instead of the difficult ones.

Participant #12

I am eleven years old, and I read my first English story in the bilingual kindergarten…. I only remember that there were full of big pictures [in the English storybook], and I didn’t understand the story very much.
My teacher will explain the vocabularies and grammar to us, and I can understand her explanation. However, when reading by myself, I just skip those difficult vocabularies and grammar, and I won’t check the dictionary due to the inconvenience.

I think reading English stories is difficult, especially the vocabularies. If I can understand the vocabularies, [most of the time] I can understand the whole sentence. Moreover, to check the dictionary is not very helpful because I just forget the definition of the vocabulary after checking for only once. In my free time, I don’t read English stories unless I am very bored. Although I like the adventure stories, I don’t understand the English version…. The only thing I can do is just to flip the whole English storybook, and look at the pictures. Even though I think the content might be fun, I am unable to read the story. Besides, I don’t learn any background knowledge through English stories because I usually read Chinese stories…. Also, reading English stories is useless in reading comprehension, and I just learn some vocabularies.

Participant #13

I am twelve years old now, and I started learning English in a bilingual kindergarten. At that time, I just understood part of the vocabularies and grammar, so I got the main idea of the story by pictures. Adventure stories are my favorite type of English stories because they are interesting, exciting and amusing.

The teacher often introduces and explains new vocabularies and grammar to us. Moreover, sometimes the teacher likes to act, and we all think it’s very funny and interesting. Besides, after the teacher’s role play, we can understand the story even more. Actually, I don’t check the dictionary very often (small pause) because it is too troublesome. I just ignore the parts I don’t understand [while reading a story by myself].

I think it is fine for me to read English stories. (Small pause) The part which I usually have problems with is the vocabulary part, and I don’t care much about the grammar since the sentence can be understood after knowing the vocabularies. In fact, I seldom read English storybooks, and I have to do other assignments. (Small pause) I don’t want to read English stories, which acquires a lot of checking work. [However,] I think the background knowledge in the stories can be connected to others. Furthermore, by reading stories, I learn some vocabularies which are useful for understanding, but I still have no interests in reading English stories.

Participant #14

I am a twelve-year-old girl, and I have a tutor to teach me English at home. I started to read English stories when I was in the second or third grade of this elementary school. At that time, my mom just kept chattering on and on until I really read a story. I didn’t understand the vocabularies in that book, but the sentences were very simple.

The teacher at school will explain the vocabularies and grammar after reading the story. Once, during the class, (small laugh) I said that the teacher has a big body, and then the teacher asked me to stand up (small laugh). When I have some problems in reading stories, I
will ask my classmates. However, I don’t check the dictionary, and I think that just wastes my time. Besides, usually I can understand the meaning of the story [on my own]. Therefore, I don’t think the vocabularies and grammar are big problems.

In my opinion, I think the most important thing in reading is to comprehend the main points. If comparing the influences of the vocabulary and grammar, I think the role of vocabulary is more primary. I don’t like English, so I don’t read English stories out of the classroom. It is boring to read them. Nevertheless, the background knowledge helps me to comprehend a story which is similar and familiar. To be honest, reading English stories can increase my comprehension ability in reading due to the similar vocabularies and grammar. Even so, I still don’t like to read.

**Participant #15**

I have learned English since I was in the bilingual kindergarten…. Now, I am twelve years old. I didn’t understand the English story which I read at that time very well. If I could understand the vocabularies, the sentences were not very difficult.

The teacher often explains the whole story paragraph by paragraph. The main focus is on the vocabularies rather than the grammar rules, and the explanations of the vocabularies are the most useful. I check the dictionary only at home, and I just guess the meaning [of vocabularies and sentences] or ask others when I am at school. Mostly, the more pictures a storybook contains, the more interests I will have. Also, I only want to read the stories which I am interested in, or I would rather watch TV.

To me, it is easier to read English stories than before, and vocabularies are the main reason of influence. I think reading English stories will increase my interest in reading other materials, but it depends on the topics. Furthermore, I can learn the background knowledge from stories, and find out the similarities. This kind of knowledge is also useful in reading. (Small pause) I am not quite sure whether reading English stories can improve my reading comprehension ability, but I think after building the habits of reading English stories, I can read much faster. In addition, I learn more vocabularies.

**Participant #16**

I started to read English stories when I was a third or fourth grade of elementary school student…. Because of the unfamiliar vocabularies, I just skipped the parts I didn’t understand.

Now, the teacher will explain both vocabularies and sentences of the English stories. If I just read stories by myself, I often check the dictionary or ask the teacher questions. Also, the definitions from the dictionary can help me to understand the stories completely. [Actually,] I think reading stories are very boring, and there is no fun at all, especially for those new vocabularies. Therefore, I won’t read English stories during my leisure time.

I don’t think it is hard for me to read English stories, because the difficulty of vocabularies and grammar is at our level. As for the background knowledge, I think it is useful in two similar stories. [Finally,] reading English stories can improve the reading ability because when I encounter the same vocabulary, I can recall my memory more easily.
Thus, I think reading English stories is effective, but not exactly interesting.

*Participant #17*

I am twelve years old now, and I started to learn English and read English stories in the bilingual kindergarten. Due to the beginning level of English learning, I could not understand the vocabularies in the stories.

In this elementary school, the teacher uses the vocabulary cards to teach us new vocabularies. After his explanation, although I am still not familiar with new vocabularies, at least I understand the meanings of them. [In fact,] when my teacher teaches a story, we feel very bored, and everyone just does his or her own work. Moreover, students who don’t concentrate will get the punishment. However, when I have some problems in reading, I will go and ask my teacher. I don’t check the dictionary for the reason of laziness.

I think reading English stories is difficult, especially the vocabularies. In addition, I don’t like to read stories, too. It takes time to understand, and English stories are difficult and uninteresting. Therefore, my interest in reading even decreases. Really, I am sick of English stories, and I just want to read Chinese books. [On the other hand,] I think the background knowledge such as the countries can be useful to the reading comprehension when reading stories with the similar background. In addition, it’s very interesting to know those different countries and people with different nationalities. What’s more, I think that I learn a lot of vocabularies, and the speed of reading increase, too. Reading English stories can improve the reading comprehension ability, and useful in reading. However, I still don’t like to read English stories.