

# What helps me to read in English: Students' perspectives about the factors that have assisted their reading development.

In a well-balanced language course, equal time is given to each of the four strands of meaning-focused input, meaning-focused output, language-focused learning, and fluency development. Nation (2009)p.1.



**Students from the FFTO class at Wintec in 2013 on a visit to the Waikato Museum. They come from diverse educational / literacy backgrounds and entered the class at a range of levels ( beginner to elementary).**

## Four strand balanced reading programme ( Nation, 2009) and FFTO Language programme outline.

	<b>Reading programme in FFTO programme, Wintec, 2013.</b>
Meaning focused input	*reading English online ( web pages, emails), *Australia Network programme *reading workbooks for unit standards, *FLAX programme, Study Ladder (CALL) *class discussions re unit topics,
Meaning focused output	*writing-recounts, descriptive writing. *FLAX programme, Study Ladder(CALL)
Language-focused learning	*Picture dictionary (based on phonetics / sounds). *teacher led language lessons.
Fluency development	*Extensive reading programme - daily silent reading, 10 - 15 minutes. **"In Words of One Syllable"- easy reading material for beginners.

"If you accept the essential idiosyncrasy of humanity ... you may decide to adopt a 'scattergun' approach, whereby you offer a multitude of learning opportunities for learners, and expect them to select according to their own particular needs." Allwright, D. (2006)p.14.

## Student's voices from interviews: What is helping me to read in FFTO.

Bilingual interpreters assisted me to collect this data.

Reading the books that the tutors give us is really helpful. When I read them I think "Oh, this is how they write."

Working in a group really is fabulous. The teachers help a lot in the groups.

Reading silently helps me because reading aloud is too difficult, but when its silent it helps me to focus.

Silent reading is good but I prefer to read aloud so I can be corrected

I remember the words I forgot when I write.

When the teacher tells a story I use my English-Burmese dictionary to find out the meanings of the words

I like reading long books. I like fiction and mystery and I read at home.

Every morning I read at home. I read the paper from New World, Forlongs and Countdown. I read the specials.

We can't understand too much. Too much vocabulary.

## Results and Discussion

- Ratings in reading activities increased steadily over the three collections
- Students valued the paper based and electronic resources available in the class. They feel comfortable with blended learning (CALL)
- They valued explicit language focused learning which they called grammar
- There was an even spread when asked if they enjoyed reading easy or hard books or both
- They were all able to name concrete examples of their own learning progress.

Delivery of a balanced reading programme and a relevant well-scaffolded language course with multiple learning opportunities seemed to achieve good learning results on FFTO. 12 students achieved a Certificate in Training Opportunities for Speakers of Other Languages Level 1.

