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**Varieties of recall as indicators of reader-text interaction:  
a case study**

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**Abstract**

This study examines the differences between proficient and less proficient ESL readers' comprehension of a written English passage with regards to:

1. the quantity and kinds of text information recalled
2. possible causes of misinterpretation of text information
3. depth of reader-text interaction

The subjects of this study consist of 20 ESL readers enrolled in an English proficiency course at matriculation level: 9 proficient and 11 less proficient ESL readers. They read the passage, jotted down notes and then orally retold what they remembered of the text. The recall protocols were analysed using Sali Zaliha Mustapha's (1991) method of content-structure analysis. The results of this study offer insights into how ESL readers reconstruct the text-acquired information to form coherent wholes. This paper also offers suggestions as to how retelling can be used as an instruction strategy and assessment tool for reading comprehension.

**Aim of Study**

The aim of this study is to investigate reader-text interaction as revealed by what ESL learners recall after reading a passage in English. It seeks to compare the recall of proficient and less proficient ESL readers with regards to:

1. the amount and kinds of text information recalled;
2. possible causes of misinterpretation of text information; and
3. depth of reader-text interaction.

**Significance of the Study**

**Theoretical justification.**

Past research has revealed much on reading comprehension and recall by ESL learners. Meyer (1975) compared differences in recall of propositions/idea units between L1 and L2 students, and found no significant difference in the recall of superordinate ideas but the native readers excelled in the recall of subordinate ideas. Similar results were obtained by Connor (1984) in a study on 31 adult students from three different language backgrounds: English, Japanese and Spanish. Both studies made use of Meyer's content structure analysis. A

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