CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Stenhouse (1975) views teaching as an Art and a research process. It is an Art because a teacher test and explore teaching ideas intuitively and then proceeds to revise and adjust them. And it is a research process because teaching is an activity which involves constant problematic situations which require teachers to decide how best to engage teaching decisions in each particular situation.

Classroom teaching and learning are the responsibility of the classroom practitioner. As such learning and teaching problems that arise from within the classroom rests largely upon the teachers concerned. Bearing this in mind, this study adopts action research because “classroom research is about bettering classroom experience (Stenhouse, 1975).

SAMPLE

The Sample selected for this case study is a girl and a boy. Both students of Chinese ethnic background had their primary education in a Chinese school. They had
formal English Language lessons from year three onwards. English Language is their third language. The samples who are now in Form one, are low proficiency learners. An earlier study by Tan (1999), had to a certain extent raised their self-esteem and attitudes toward the target language.

INSTRUMENTS

Questionnaire (Appendix b)

A set of twenty questions questionnaire on motivation to read profile was administered at the beginning and at the end of the study.

The pre and post motivation profile would determine any difference in the samples’ motivation at the end of the study.

Pre & Post Interviews (Appendix 3a)

An interview was carried out with each of the informants once they consented to participate in the study. It was intended to gather some information on their reading habits. The interview was again carried out at the end of the study.
Reading Text (Appendix 2a and 2b)

Ten out of thirty graded picture books were used by each of the informant. The ten books were chosen by the informants during each reading session with the researcher.

Journal Entries (Appendix 1a and 1b)

The researcher documented significant observations and reflections into her journal entries during the whole duration of the study (Day 1 until Day 10).

Written Response of the Informants (Appendix 2a and 2b)

After each reading session, informants would write down what they like about the book, new words they learn and their feelings about the book or story.

Cloze Tests and Exercises (Appendix 4a, 4b, 4c and 4d)

The cloze tests were given to the informants at the beginning of the study. Subsequently, a cloze exercise was given at the end of each reading session to see if a correlation between reading and writing could be linked. To validate this hypothesis, the cloze tests were administered at the beginning of the study.
DATA ANALYSIS

Data obtained in this study was analysed through triangulation of data from journal entries, pre and post interview, pre and post motivation to read profile, pre and post cloze tests score, cloze score, test analysis and text response.

IMPLEMENTING THE SOLUTIONS

Setting:

Each informant had ten one hour reading sessions with the researcher for ten consecutive mornings. The session was carried out in the study room of the researcher’s home located in a quiet neighbourhood. During the session, the informant and the researcher sat side by side.

Day 1:

The questionnaire and cloze test were administered. The researcher explained the rationale for the procedures to the informants. The informants were assisted with the questionnaire; Example: the meaning between 'almost everything, some, almost none, none of, very easy, and kind of easy'.
For both the informants, their biggest reading problem is the inability to pronounce English words and knowledge of their meaning. Thus the first plan of action was to read aloud to them first and they repeat. The researcher taught them to use picture clues for information about what they are reading. At the end of the session, they wrote down their response to the text they have read. They completed the cloze exercise.

**Day 2: Repeated the plan**

The researcher read followed by the informant. Emphasised the difference of long and short vowels. Use picture clues to enhance comprehension. Wrote down their text response and completed the cloze exercise.

**Day 3: Repeated the plan**

Researcher read, followed by the informant. Asked questions about the text to check comprehension. Wrote down their response to the text they read. Completed the cloze exercise.

**Day 4: Replan**

Informants ready to read aloud by themselves. Wrote down text response and completed the cloze exercise.

**Day 5: Maintained the plan**
Informants read aloud. Taught informants to use the 'guessing strategy' to unravel meaning of words by rereading preceding sentences. Wrote down text response. Completed cloze exercise.

Day 6: Informants read aloud with confidence

Facilitated use of contextual clues for lexical meaning - within the sentence. Wrote down text response. Completed cloze exercise.

Day 7: Re-plan

Retelling the story read in their own words. Wrote down their text response. Completed their cloze exercise.

Day 8: Maintained plan

Informants read with greater confidence and speed. Retold the story. Wrote their text response and completed cloze exercise.

Day 9: Re-plan

Role play to make the reading experience more interesting to the informants (some parts read by the researcher and some parts by the informant). Wrote their text response. Completed the cloze exercise.

Day 10: Maintained plan
Informants read with more fluency. Retold the story. Wrote down text response. Completed cloze exercise. Administered questionnaire and conducted a short interview with the informants.