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**BLOG-BASED EFL READING USING A SOCIAL
CONSTRUCTIVIST INSTRUCTIONAL APPROACH**



**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Master of Arts in English Language Studies**

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BLOG-BASED EFL READING USING A SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVIST INSTRUCTIONAL APPROACH

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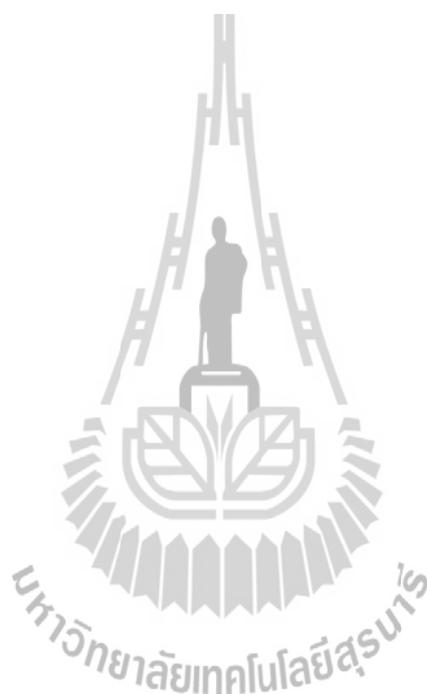
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ชวจิณ ฉนิ : การอ่านภาษาอังกฤษในฐานะภาษาต่างประเทศผ่านบล็อกโดยการสอนตามแนวคิดการสร้างความรู้โดยอาศัยปฏิสัมพันธ์ทางสังคม (BLOG-BASED EFL READING USING A SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVIST INSTRUCTIONAL APPROACH) อาจารย์ที่ปรึกษา : อาจารย์ ดร.จิตพนัส สุวรรณเทพ, 235 หน้า

การอ่านเพื่อความเข้าใจเป็นหนึ่งในทักษะที่จำเป็นมากที่สุดสำหรับผู้เรียนภาษาอังกฤษในฐานะภาษาต่างประเทศ อย่างไรก็ตามยังพบว่าคะแนนการอ่านเพื่อความเข้าใจของนักศึกษามหาวิทยาลัยไขลี่ (Kaili University หรือ KU) ในการทดสอบภาษาอังกฤษระดับมหาวิทยาลัย (College English Test หรือ CET) ยังไม่เป็นที่น่าพึงพอใจ ดังนั้นการพัฒนาการอ่านเพื่อความเข้าใจของนักศึกษามหาวิทยาลัยไขลี่จึงมีความจำเป็นจากงานวิจัยที่ผ่านมาแสดงให้เห็นว่าแนวคิดการสร้างความรู้โดยอาศัยปฏิสัมพันธ์ทางสังคม (Social Constructivist Approaches) รวมไปถึงสภาพแวดล้อมในการใช้คอมพิวเตอร์ช่วยเรียนภาษา (Computer-Assisted Language Learning หรือ CALL) สามารถส่งเสริมการเรียนการสอนภาษาอังกฤษในฐานะภาษาต่างประเทศได้ งานวิจัยนี้ได้สร้างบล็อกขึ้นมาเพื่อใช้ในการสอนการอ่านโดยใช้หลักการการเสริมต่อการเรียนรู้ (Scaffolding) และการเรียนรู้แบบร่วมมือ (Collaborative Learning) ตามแนวคิดการสร้างความรู้โดยอาศัยปฏิสัมพันธ์ทางสังคม (Social Constructivist BALL) เครื่องมือในการวิจัยสามประเภท ได้แก่ ข้อสอบการอ่านก่อนและหลังการทดลอง แบบสอบถามก่อนและหลังการทดลอง และการสัมภาษณ์ผ่านบล็อก ถูกนำมาใช้ในงานวิจัยนี้ เพื่อศึกษาผลกระทบของการเรียนภาษาผ่านบล็อกตามแนวคิดการสร้างความรู้โดยอาศัยปฏิสัมพันธ์ทางสังคมต่อการอ่านเพื่อความเข้าใจและทัศนคติต่อการอ่านของนักศึกษานักศึกษาสองกลุ่ม ได้แก่ กลุ่มควบคุม (ห้องที่ไม่ได้เรียนผ่านบล็อก) และกลุ่มทดลอง (ห้องที่เรียนผ่านบล็อก) เข้าร่วมงานวิจัยนี้ แต่ละกลุ่มประกอบไปด้วยนักศึกษาระดับปริญญาตรี เอกภาษาอังกฤษ ชั้นปีที่ 1 มหาวิทยาลัยไขลี่ จำนวน 55 คน ผลการศึกษา พบว่าการเรียนภาษาผ่านบล็อกตามแนวคิดการสร้างความรู้โดยอาศัยปฏิสัมพันธ์ทางสังคมส่งผลเชิงบวกต่อการพัฒนาการอ่านเพื่อความเข้าใจและทัศนคติต่อการอ่านของนักศึกษ จนถึงแม้ว่านักศึกษาส่วนน้อย (13%) ในกลุ่มที่เรียนผ่านบล็อกจะไม่เห็นด้วย แต่นักศึกษาส่วนใหญ่ (87%) กลับพึงพอใจกับการเรียนภาษาผ่านบล็อกตามแนวคิดการสร้างความรู้โดยอาศัยปฏิสัมพันธ์ทางสังคม ผลการศึกษาแสดงให้เห็นว่าการนำการสอนตามแนวคิดการสร้างความรู้โดยอาศัยปฏิสัมพันธ์ทางสังคมและสภาพแวดล้อมในการใช้คอมพิวเตอร์ช่วยเรียนภาษามาใช้มีความจำเป็นต่อความสำเร็จในการเรียนการสอนการอ่านสำหรับผู้เรียนภาษาอังกฤษในฐานะภาษาต่างประเทศ นอกจากนี้งานวิจัยนี้ยังช่วยส่งเสริมความเข้าใจต่อการสอนตามแนวคิดการสร้างความรู้โดยอาศัยปฏิสัมพันธ์ทางสังคม บล็อก และการอ่านเพื่อความ

เข้าใจในบริบทการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษในฐานะภาษาต่างประเทศของประเทศจีน ในขณะที่เดียวกัน งานวิจัยนี้ อาจจะช่วยเปลี่ยนความเข้าใจของครูผู้สอนต่อการสอนตามแนวคิดการสร้างความรู้ โดยอาศัยปฏิสัมพันธ์ทางสังคมรวมไปถึงการใช้คอมพิวเตอร์ช่วยเรียนภาษา



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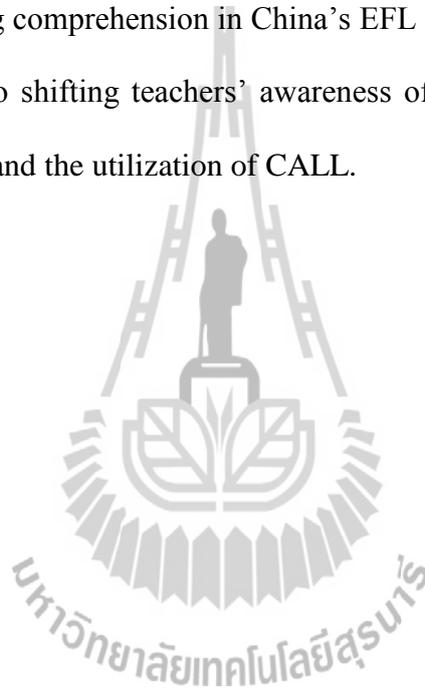
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ลายมือชื่ออาจารย์ที่ปรึกษา _____

SHUJING SHEN : BLOG-BASED EFL READING USING A SOCIAL
CONSTRUCTIVIST INSTRUCTIONAL APPROACH . THESIS
ADVISOR : JITPANAT SUWANTHEP, Ph.D., 235 PP.

EFL READING COMPREHENSION / BALL / SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVIST
INSTRUCTIONAL APPROACH / SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM

Reading comprehension is one of the most essential skills for EFL learners. However, Kaili University (KU) students' scores of reading comprehension in the College English Test (CET) were unsatisfactory. Therefore, there was a need to improve KU students' reading comprehension. Previous studies showed that social constructivist approaches as well as computer-assisted language learning (CALL) environments could facilitate EFL learning and teaching. Thus, this study made an attempt to create blog-based modules to teach reading via using scaffolding and collaborative learning approaches based on social constructivism (social constructivist BALL). In the present study, three research instruments, including a pre-experimental reading test and a post-experimental reading test, a pre-experimental questionnaire and a post-experimental questionnaire, and a blog interview, were used to investigate the impacts of the social constructivist BALL on students' reading comprehension and their attitudes towards reading. Two groups of students, a control group (the non-blog class) and an experimental group (the blog-based class), participated in this study. Each group consisted of 55 KU first-year English major undergraduates. Results showed that the social constructivist BALL had positive impacts on improving students' reading comprehension and their attitudes towards reading.

Although the minority (13%) of students in the blog-based group had some disapproved opinions, the majority (87%) of students upheld the social constructivist BALL class. The findings indicated that the integration of an instructional approach grounded on social constructivism and a CALL environment was essential to the success of learning and teaching of reading for EFL learners. In addition, this study may contribute to an understanding of the social constructivist instructional approach, blogs and EFL reading comprehension in China's EFL context. Meanwhile, this study may also contribute to shifting teachers' awareness of pedagogy which is based on social constructivism and the utilization of CALL.



School of Foreign Languages

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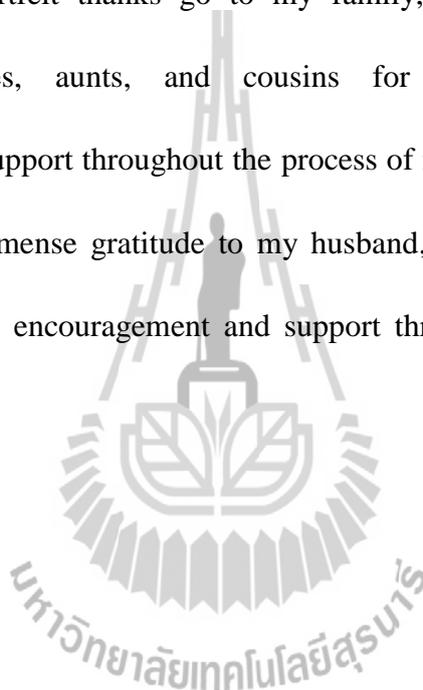


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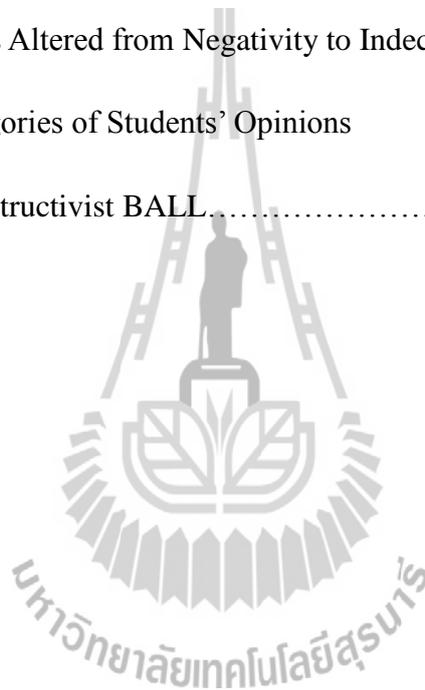
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANOVA.....	Analysis of Variance
BALL.....	Blog-Assisted Language Learning
CALL.....	Computer-Assisted Language Learning
CET.....	College English Test
EFL.....	English as a Foreign Language
IOC.....	Item-Objective Congruence Index
KU.....	Kaili University
L2.....	Second Language



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives a brief introduction to the study which focuses on an EFL reading instruction in China. It covers the background of the study, statements of the problem, purposes of the study, research questions, significance, constraints of the study, definitions of key terms, and a summary of this chapter.

1.1 Background

As is known to us, reading is one of the most important skills of foreign language learning, and it is regarded as a basic component of English proficiency tests, for instance, TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language), IELTS (International English Language Testing System), GRE (Graduate Record Examination), SAT (Scholastic Assessment Test), and China's TEM (Test for English Major) and CET (College English Test), and so on. Thus, it is essential to investigate approaches to instructions of reading comprehension. Reading is a complex cognitive process processed by a reader's prior knowledge, experiences, attitudes, and language community which is culturally and socially situated (Aebersold & Field, 1997; Langer, 1990). In accordance with constructivism, reading requires readers to interact with target reading materials individually (Anderson & Kanuka, 1999; Derry, 1996; Piaget,

1968). Besides, readers can understand and learn the target materials with target knowledge by interacting with other people (Vygotsky, 1978). If a teacher wants to effectively and efficiently promote students' reading, he or she could facilitate the reading class by teaching in a sound environment under an appropriate approach (Land & Hannafin, 2000).

Nowadays, a popular learning environment that can be applied in classroom is computer-assisted language learning (CALL). CALL means utilizing computer facilities, hardware, software, Web 2.0, the Internet and other tools to enhance language learning. For the past several decades, research studies related to CALL have been spread far and wide in the world (Levy, 2000; Warschauer, 2000; Chapelle, 2001). With the development of science and technology, computer techniques have stridden many steps. At the same time, the application of computer in teaching has marched onwards. More and more teachers are realizing that language teaching is no longer a 'spoon-feeding' or grammar-focused pedagogy, thus they need to exploit a new thought of teaching by utilizing CALL.

Recently, a brand new language teaching methodology is grounded on constructivism, which emphasizes that learning is an interactive and understanding process by interacting prior knowledge with new things, and students' learning is to internalize knowledge by themselves, rather than by teachers' 'feeding' (Doğru & Kalender, 2007). According to Vygotsky (1978), knowledge construction and learning happen through interaction between individuals and elements of society, and then the

individuals internalize information to understand or learn new knowledge. Based on his theory, a social constructivist approach is proposed as an instruction of teaching (see the social constructivist approach in 2.1.1.3 from page 31 to 39). Simultaneously, with the rapid development of computer technology and the Internet speed, teachers may promote the efficient use of CALL. In modern times, teachers can make language learning more meaningful than before by using computers, such as speech recognition technology, which can digitize the oral input by learners, and then it is interpreted by analysis software of the computer, e.g. video conferencing, video and audio online communications (Chartrand, 2002). In line with the extension of CALL, for instance, computer-mediated communication (CMC), wikis-assisted language learning (WALL) and blog-assisted language learning (BALL) (see BALL in 2.1.3 on page 54), more and more computer-based learning tools and environments are introduced into language classes. Hence, perhaps CALL can achieve interactive learning and teaching, and facilitate learners' understanding based on the core idea of constructivism.

Today, in China, many teachers have been able to learn and create many things from computers. Meanwhile, computers play an increasingly important role in people's daily lives, even in classroom learning and teaching. For CALL's importance and frequent utilization, teachers are required to apply digital videos, sound, graphics and animation to CALL courseware in language classes. However, since the idea of behaviorism has chronically occupied China's major English education, it is difficult to implement the new thought of constructivism to the use of CALL effectively.

Behaviorism emphasizes that learning happens through controlled stimulus-response conditioning (Skinner, 1954). From the perspective of behaviorism, a learner learns new knowledge by repeatedly stimulating and responding (doing something like imitating, memorizing, reciting and so on). According to Skinner's (1954) behaviorism, teachers ask students in classes to listen to the teachers' tutoring and training, and then require them to repeatedly reinforce the basic knowledge that they've just learnt. Some research studies indicate that behaviorism has drawbacks, which lead language teachers in classroom to keep speaking and to ask students repeatedly to do something but not make students interactively respond what they have learnt or make students learn together (Shen, 2011). Concurrently, the effectiveness of CALL's application based on constructivism remains to be proven.

With the great progress of China's economy and technology, the effect of the use of personal computers and the Internet has been increasingly prevalent and far-reaching. Applying computer technology to language learning classroom has no longer been a day-dream. CALL is closely relevant to some main facets of foreign language learning and teaching, and it is an effective tool to facilitate teaching and can help students' learning in and out of classroom (Shi, 2006; Shen, 2011). The use of computer as a teaching supplement has a significant effect on learners' attitudes and motivation (Merrill & Hammons, 1996; Molnar, 1997; Bax, 2003; Tunçok, 2010). According to Feng (2006) and Zheng (2006), CALL can create an interactive environment for both learners and teachers, and it is an effective way to construct

knowledge and learning for learners. On the basis of constructivism, China needs this kind of environment for foreign language learning and teaching.

However, in fact, the implementation of CALL has not been found everywhere in China. From primary schools, secondary schools to tertiary education, there are still many schools facing some problems, for instance, lack of facilities, short of equipment maintenance, and unavailability of the Internet and so on (Han, 2010). In China's tertiary education, basically, this kind of problems is less, because most of those universities have abundant funds and they are capable of building a CALL environment. Kaili University (KU), in Guizhou province, a new developing university with more than 10,000 students and 70 foreign language teachers, is trying to construct a good CALL environment including a computer center, five more language labs, dozens of multimedia classrooms, and two college English online learning platforms.

The thought of constructivism needs a period of transition to infuse China's education (Luo, 2005). The teaching approaches based on social constructivism, for example, communicative language teaching, cooperative language teaching, or project-based language teaching, still have not been used far and wide in China. On the part of KU, the implementation of introductions from the pedagogy of social constructivism is only in the early phase. Furthermore, no one dares to affirmatively say that teaching and learning will be made a great progress if teachers utilize CALL in our classroom under the instruction of social constructivism. Consequently, its effectiveness remains to be proven.

Gündüz (2005) stated that CALL enables the interactive teaching and provides practice in the four skills: writing, reading, speaking and listening, as well as grammar and problem solving. That is to say, computers can facilitate foreign language reading skills by utilizing the interactive teaching approaches based on constructivism. A social constructivist approach can be considered as an interactive teaching approach, because they both have emphasis on the interactive learning process and learning environments. For instance, BALL as a tool of CALL can provide an environment for learners to read, write, communicate and interact their ideas, feeling and knowledge with each other, and this environment may unconsciously get them involved in understanding and learning about some information.

As mentioned above, CALL tools have been providing the environment for interaction between learners and reading materials, and it also can supply abundant background knowledge to help readers' understanding. In China, a big country with more than 1.3 billion population, how to carry out the thought of constructivism in education is a serious issue. Pedagogy under the constructivism demands that teaching should be learner-centered, focus on students' own understanding, and interact with others individually. However, at present, there are still many schools and colleges facing problems of large class size and limited time of classroom learning for each subject. Therefore, it is very difficult to instruct students individually in classrooms. Thus here comes a wonderful idea that is CALL.

In Kaili University, many EFL teachers usually have lectures in a big class size, especially for teachers who teach college English. Computers may help teachers solve this problem because in a CALL environment students may learn interactively through peers and the teacher, and the teacher may obtain more time to instruct every individual student in or out of classrooms. For instance, in a blog-based reading class, a teacher sets his or her own blog and leaves tasks on the blog, and then asks students to accomplish them on the blog. In this process, students may experience self-responses and reflection of new knowledge, and go through interaction with other peers and the teacher. If the large-class-size problem can be solved, students' English learning may be improved. However, it is regrettable that at the developing KU students' English study still has no progress according to a low rate of passing CET, which will be introduced in detail below. With respect to reading comprehension test, students' progress is going slowly according to the data derived from the Office of Academic Affairs at KU (see 1.2.1 below). The reason might be that CALL has not been utilized with a proper instruction or a teaching approach. Hence, it is extremely significant for teachers and educators to examine whether CALL with a newly introduced teaching approach can positively influence reading teaching.

1.2 Statement of the Problems

1.2.1 National English Tests and Reading Comprehension

In China, there is a major national English test called CET for English as foreign language (EFL) learners. The full name of CET is College English Test, which is administered by the National College English Testing Committee under the Higher Education Department, Ministry of Education, the People's Republic of China (the P. R. C). CET is to assess Chinese undergraduate students' English proficiency, and encourage them to reach the required English level as provided by the National College English Teaching Syllabus (NCETS). In accordance with the NCETS, three tests are included in CET, which is, Band 4 (CET-4), Band 6 (CET-6), and the CET-Spoken English Test (CET-SET). The CET-4 and the CET-6 are organized twice a year at the end of each semester. Test takers have to complete the test within 125 minutes. Four sub-scores are counted in the CET total score (710 points): listening comprehension (249 points, 35%), reading comprehension (249 points, 35%), and writing and translation (212 points, 30%) (Zheng & Chen, 2008). The CET can be used to test non-English majors and English majors. The CET is an essential part in China's national tests for EFL learners. Moreover, reading comprehension is a vital component in CET-4 and CET-6 tests. The percentage of the part of reading comprehension is 35% in both tests respectively. Compared the ratio of this part with the ratios of other parts, reading comprehension is very important for all EFL learners (see 3.3.1 on page 79 about the details of reading comprehension part of CET band-4).

However, at Kaili University (KU), of all the students who took the CET test in 2012, only 7.03% of them passed CET band-4 (the data were derived from Office of Academic Affairs of KU), which is relatively low. Regarding the reading part in CET band-4, statistics released by the Office of Academic Affairs of KU showed that only 9.23% of the students taking the test reached the qualified level of passing this part, which is above 150 points (total 249 points) in the 2012 CET band-4 test. Thus, it can be seen that English teachers at KU are confronted with deep pressure to increase the passing rate, and there is a need to alleviate the serious situation.

1.2.2 Learning Environment for EFL Readers

It is noticeable that China is a big country with a large population. Therefore, the EFL class size is usually large in most Chinese universities and colleges. For example, Kaili University has a relatively large class size in teaching college English ranging from 40 to 130 students in a class. Consequently, students do not have enough time to interact with their teacher or peers individually. As such, most KU EFL students' English proficiency is unsatisfactory when learning in such an environment. Thus, there is a need to create a more effective learning environment for KU EFL students, which is also hoped to help KU EFL teachers instruct every student efficiently, and the ultimate goal is to improve KU students' overall English proficiency.

More and more Chinese universities including KU have employed task-based language teaching, communicative language teaching, and inter-culture teaching. In addition, Chinese EFL teachers have realized the importance of

communicative competence to students. However, there are some problems in implementing communicative competence activities in classes. At KU, for instance, students tend to be used to studying alone rather than being together to communicate. Thus, it reduces chances for them to interact. According to social constructivism, teachers may need to create interactive learning environments, such as learning groups or learning communities in on-site classrooms or online classrooms.

Today, many research studies have testified that CALL could be beneficial to EFL learning of reading (Levy, 2000; Chapelle, 2001). However, in China, especially in KU, the utilization of CALL is limited. One part of limitation may be attributed to that the funding provided by the government or universities is their inadequate awareness of the settings of CALL. At KU, only 40% of English classrooms have been equipped with CALL facilities for EFL teaching. Another part of limitation is due to teachers' scarce awareness and skills of CALL use. At KU, many English teachers have not known what CALL is and how to apply CALL in EFL teaching; they have not realized how important a social interactive learning environment would facilitate students' language learning; and they have not found how many benefits a sound teaching and learning setting could provide. The teachers' scarce awareness of CALL may lead them to ignore their skill training in applying CALL. Research studies implied that CALL can facilitate reading class (Chapelle, 2001; Chartrand, 2002). Therefore, there is a need to raise EFL teachers and students' awareness of the importance of CALL in teaching reading.

However, it is difficult to raise teachers' and students' awareness of the use of CALL if they feel that CALL has disadvantages. Actually, CALL has its own weaknesses (Lai & Kritsonis, 2006). On the one hand, because China's economy and education are in a transitional period, the purchase of the CALL facilities is under a lot of strain. It is well known that the computer and its peripheral facilities are relatively expensive even though many people these days can afford a computer in China. Accordingly, many schools and colleges lack the necessities of CALL. On the other hand, computer is very complex for Chinese teachers and students to learn, especially for elder English teachers and young learners. CALL involves too much complicated computer knowledge, including uses of websites, the creation of software and courseware and so on. When a teacher instructs students by using CALL, he or she firstly needs to know how to use these complex tools, and then learn to create his or her own teaching environments on computers. Nowadays, there are so many resources and tools in a computer that teachers can extract from the Internet for English reading learning and teaching; however, it is difficult to find a perfect tool to facilitate EFL learning of reading. If the computer is not too expensive or complex, teachers and students would be more patient to use a computer tool to communicate and interact. In the present study, the researcher is making an attempt hopefully to promote students' reading comprehension by creating a convenient, inexpensive and simple interactive CALL environment for teachers' EFL reading classes.

1.2.3 Problems on Teaching of EFL Reading

Reading comprehension accounts for a very large percentage of the content of CET, and teachers and students all know that this part of English learning is quite important. In China, there are many kinds of national textbooks aiming to promote EFL learners' reading comprehension. However, by judging from results of students' CET tests (see 1.2.1 on page 8), their performance of their reading comprehension is still unsatisfactory. There might be something wrong with the current teaching concepts of knowledge and learning, teaching methods, or teaching environments, etc.

The basic reason is that the old thought of behaviorism (see 1.1 from page 3 to 4) still takes up the main education. The core idea of teaching based on behaviorism is teacher-centeredness, which means that teachers in classes are the major roles, and students' learning are derived from the teachers' speaking, explaining and training and so on. In this process, students just need to listen to what the teachers say and then memorize the knowledge without taking any other action, e.g. rethinking, reflection introspection, responding and interacting with other people. According to Piaget's (1968) thoughts of constructivism, students may learn new knowledge under the situation with understanding by interacting new things with prior experience on their own meaning construction. Thus, a learner should be the center of learning rather than a teacher. Learning reading is also the same. A student's learning of reading needs many linguistic factors, such as words, grammar, and context and so on, and we can deem these factors as a reader's schema (Pang et al., 2003; Li et al., 2007).

Students' understanding of a reading material needs interaction between their own schema and the target material (see 2.1.2.2.1 on page 42). But, the current teaching of EFL reading is teacher-centered. Teachers have paid too much attention to build students' schema rather than the interactive process of learning.

Teaching is always difficult to be improved if teachers do not know how to accept other teaching methods that are grounded on social constructivism. According to Vygostky (1978), knowledge and learning may come from social engagement and learners' own internalization. Teaching methods based on social constructivism, such as communicative language teaching, have been introduced to China, and many universities have employed them in language classes. However, in the EFL reading classroom, most teachers keep speaking, explaining and asking content knowledge, so students seldom have chances to respond to the knowledge they learned (Zhang, 2008). Thus, this situation needs to be changed.

Social constructivism suggests that language classes should be interactive (Richardson, 2003). Therefore, teachers' instruction needs an environment to engage students' interaction. Creating this reading learning environment demands an assisting tool to help teacher and students simultaneously. By using CALL, it could replenish more interactive chances in reading classes (Chartrand, 2002). Nonetheless, at KU, the teaching of EFL reading environment of CALL needs to be improved. Many teachers do not use CALL at all in classrooms, and some teachers only utilize PowerPoint on computers for blackboard writing rather than for creating the interactive teaching environment.

In conclusion, there are many problems of reading needed to be solved such as 1) low CET passing rate; 2) lack of sound learning and teaching environment; and 3) misunderstanding of the nature of learning that make teachers teach in an improper way. Therefore, researchers need to testify the truth whether CALL can facilitate reading comprehension under the instruction of the social constructivist instructional approach. In this study, the researcher is going to study whether a social constructivist BALL class can enhance students' reading comprehension. A social constructivist BALL suggests that the researcher's teaching of reading class by implementing a blog learning environment based on a social constructivist instructional approach.

1.3 Purposes of the Study

The purposes of the present research are listed as follows:

- 1) To find out how the social constructivist BALL can impact on improving EFL students' reading comprehension.
- 2) To investigate how students' attitudes towards reading are promoted through the utilization of the social constructivist BALL.
- 3) To explore students' opinions on the social constructivist BALL reading class, and to study how the BALL can help with their EFL reading comprehension in the English reading class.

1.4 Research Questions

This study is designed to answer the following research questions:

- 1) In what way does the social constructivist BALL have an impact on improving EFL students' reading comprehension?
- 2) How are students' attitudes towards reading promoted by the implementation of the social constructivist BALL?
- 3) What are the students' opinions on the social constructivist BALL reading class? How can the social constructivist BALL help with their EFL reading comprehension in the English reading class?

1.5 Significance of the Study

In this study, a pedagogical suggestion based on the social constructivism could be considered as the core concept to instruct a blog-based reading class, and it attempts to solve the problems of students' reading comprehension and help teachers find a positive way to facilitate teaching. The researcher in the present study proposes a social constructivist instructional approach to the blog-based reading class. The teaching of students' EFL reading comprehension is hopefully improved, and EFL students' reading comprehension and attitudes are hopefully promoted via the use of blog-assisted language learning (BALL) under the instruction of a social constructivist approach. This study is anticipating that its findings could provide some implications for EFL teaching and learning. Moreover, the results from this study may

provide other researchers benefits on their ideas of improving language learners' learning, especially on learning reading.

Currently, computer-assisted language learning (CALL) is regarded as a tool and an environment to facilitate learning and teaching. EFL teachers can create a better reading environment by utilizing CALL. Moreover, these teachers are undertaking the tasks of aiding poor language learners and boosting their learning interests and positive attitudes towards EFL learning. Hereby this research is designed to examine whether there is an impact of using BALL technology on promoting students' reading comprehension and their attitudes towards EFL reading class. If the results indicate that there are some positive impacts, it would give those teachers who do not usually use CALL teaching tool or environment a good impression. And the results may encourage teachers to use CALL because it could help students. BALL as a part of CALL used by the researcher is not too complex or expensive for a teacher to create, and it is colorful, attractive and interesting for engaging students. This may encourage teachers or researchers to use CALL because they can find its' tools and create a sound learning environment without taking too much time and money. If the results indicate that there are some positive impacts of the social constructivist instructional approach on promoting students' reading comprehension and their attitudes towards EFL reading via the support of BALL, it would provide a theoretical framework for other researchers and teachers to think about new teaching tools, environments, approaches, or methods.

1.6 Constraints of the Study

The present study has strengths on the utilization of triangulation research method which yields the procedures of an empirical experimentation and processes of valid and reliable data collection and analysis. However, like other language studies on the sectors of CALL, this study may have constraints to solve in order to conquer doubts of the reliability and validity. The constraints of the present study are as follows:

Firstly, the research population is constrained. The participants are English majors from KU and they may not be necessarily the representatives of the population of all EFL learners in China because they come from different places and have different background on English learning and computer uses. The researcher should be careful to balance students' genders, levels of proficiency on different backgrounds.

Secondly, the empirical teaching experimentation is constrained. Students may come across some restricted conditions with regard to the availability of computers and the Internet. If one student cannot access the blogs frequently, the validity and reliability of the results from data collection are likely to be changed. Furthermore, some students may not be used to reading on a computer because they have different learning styles. The researcher needs to pay attention to students' difficulties in using computers, and helps them overcome problems.

In the main study, in terms of the present condition, the researcher conducted the experimentation on two intact classes including a control group (10

males and 45 females) and an experimental group (10 males and 45 females). The two groups of students were first year English majors at KU. Although the participants' genders and levels of proficiency were not equal, the researcher tried to balance both classes' genders equally; and the researcher did her best to boost the lower English proficiency level students to replenish their schema for reading so that their proficiency level could be equal overall. Furthermore, in the teaching experiment, despite the researcher taught students how to blog online and tried her best to help students overcome difficulties, some students still felt that it was not convenient for them to study on blogs because of the lack of personal computers. To sum up, this study has some constraints, and though the researcher has optimized the study to the utmost, the constraints are still there and they are beyond the researcher's control.

1.7 Definitions of Key Terms

BALL - It is the abbreviation of blog-assisted language learning. BALL refers to the uses of blogs by Web 2.0 technique of websites of computer technologies to facilitate language learning and teaching.

CALL - It is the abbreviation of computer-assisted language learning. CALL refers to the utilization of computer facilities, hardware, software, Web 2.0, the Internet and other tools to enhance language learning and teaching.

Collaborative learning - Collaborative learning stresses students' joint efforts, which make a teacher and students work in pairs or groups to explore

understanding, solutions or meanings, or to make contributions according to course materials. It also needs the learning environment where pairs or groups learn something together.

Constructivism - Constructivism basically is a synthesis of perceptions from philosophy, sociology, psychology, and education. It exposes the nature of human's construction of knowledge and learning acquisition. It not only describes the cognitive process that learners construct their own understanding of world information and social experience in the brain, but also demonstrates learners' interactive processing of knowledge learning between new information and existed experience, and their interaction of knowledge with other people.

EFL Learners - EFL learners mean the learners of English as a foreign language. In this study, the term of EFL learners refers to Chinese English learners who treat English as one of their foreign languages.

Engagement Theory - Engagement Theory emphasizes that learning should be engaged in meaningful activities by interaction with other people or tasks, problems and projects. Engagement theory aims to build collaborative teams who work on interesting activities that are meaningful to them in and outside the classroom. Furthermore, students must be actively engaged through interaction with others in those learning activities.

Scaffolding - Scaffolding is a term relevant to various and flexible formats of support or assist provided by an instructor or more capable peers. A teacher

should clarify the objectives and give students clear instructions, promote collaborative tasks. If students' knowledge is built strong enough, the teacher can gradually quit the support or assist.

Schema Theory - Schema Theory means a learner's prior knowledge, experience, and background. Schema in language reading process plays an important role in helping readers comprehend texts. A reader makes use of his or her own schema to construct meanings and to understand a reading text.

Social Constructivist Approach - In this study, the social constructivist approach in EFL learning and teaching is grounded on the pedagogy of constructivism, which emphasizes a reciprocal relationship between individual and society. The social constructivists deem learning as a dynamic and social process, and learning occurs via the construction of meaning in social interaction, within cultures, and through languages. The social constructivist approach suggests that, in language teaching, teachers do not only need to focus on students' individual cognitive processing of language, but also need to pay attention to their collaboration and interaction with others by using the target language. Hence, teachers are required to control the role of teachers and that of students, scaffold language knowledge to students, and engage students in learning by building a sound environment in which students can use language to communicate with each other through proper activities, assignments and assessments.

1.8 Summary

This chapter presented an introduction to the study. The research background of the investigation were described firstly. And then, the statement of problems in EFL reading, the purposes of the study, the research questions, the constraints and the definitions of key terms were discussed. In the next chapter, a theoretical framework and literature review of related theories and research studies will be presented.



CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents a literature review of related research studies on a social constructivist approach grounded on the theory of constructivism for instructing English as a foreign language (EFL) reading classes in a blog-assisted language learning (BALL) environment. It is divided into three sections. The first section introduces the theoretical background of a social constructivist approach in a constructivism perception, theories of reading to teachers' instruction, and basic concepts and benefits of BALL. In addition, this section discusses BALL modules based on the social constructivist instructional approach to teaching a reading text. The second section presents related research studies on the relationships between constructivism and reading, BALL and reading, and a social constructivist approach and reading. The final section is a summary of this chapter.

2.1 Theoretical Background

2.1.1 Constructivism

Constructivism basically is a synthesis of perceptions from philosophy, sociology, psychology, and education. Constructivism refers to theories of knowledge and learning acquisition. Its theories of knowledge are relevant to philosophy and

sociology, which describe the cognitive process that learners construct their own understanding of world information and social experience in the brain; its theories of learning relate to psychology and education, which demonstrate learners' interactive process of knowledge learning between new information and existed experience (Lowenthal & Muth, 2008).

During the 1930s and 1940s, constructivism was seen as a core perspective that leads the education of the United States (Lowenthal & Muth, 2008). It was mainly developed by Piaget's (1968) genetic epistemology theories of childhood development and education, and Dewey's (1916) learning theories that encourage expanding learners' real life experiences to construct knowledge in an active learning environment, in which teachers are required to offer interaction, exploration, thinking, reflection, and democracy to learners (Byrnes, 1996; Sjoberg, 2007). Vygotsky (1986) and Bruner (1986) added and advocated new perspectives of constructivism to constructivist learning theory and practice, which introduced the social aspect of learning into constructivism (McKendry, 2009; Sjoberg, 2007).

Constructivism has significant implications for language teaching (Shen, 2011). In recent decades, under the guidance of theories of constructivism, many representative language teaching methodologies were well proposed and practiced, such as communicative language teaching, task-based language teaching, and collaborative language teaching and so on (McKendry, 2009). Currently, some constructivists raise numerous other teaching methods and approaches to second

language learning, for instance, problem-based approach, project-based approach, collaborative learning and scaffolding approach, etc. (Oh & Yager, 2004). Thus, it can be seen that theories of constructivism play a very important role in today's second language education. For language studies, understanding the basic theories of constructivism is an essential mission.

2.1.1.1 Key Concepts of Constructivism

Fundamentally, constructivism is an epistemology, and it is a learning making theory that provides an interpretation of the nature of knowledge and how people learn (Ismat, 1999). Its theories of knowledge emphasize that knowledge is individually and socially constructed by people rather than received from others or the external world (Kanselaar, 2002). Brooks and Brooks (1993) deem constructivism as that people construct their own knowledge and understanding of the world through experiencing things and reflecting on those experiences and of the world they live, and seek tools to help them understand what they are experiencing. Its theories of learning assert that people's learning is constructing new understanding via interaction between what they experienced and new things (Shah, 2007; Sjoberg, 2007). Moreover, the interaction can be practiced individually and socially. In terms of the main idea of constructivism, teachers should not only help students construct individual understandings and engage them in the construction of meaning, but also create a sound environment for students' interaction (Brooks & Brooks, 1993).

These key concepts of constructivism are integrated in the following two main notions:

- **Constructing knowledge:** Learners understand knowledge by their own cognitive processing of meanings via using their own schema (see 2.1.2.2.1 on page 42), which refers to learners' prior knowledge and background experiences in education and culture.
- **Constructing interaction:** Learners learn knowledge by constructing interaction between schemata and new information via social settings, which are *mediums* (books, TVs, the Internet, and telecommunications), *people* (family members, teachers, peers, and experts), and *environments* (homes, schools, classrooms, libraries, labs and so on).

Lowenthal and Muth (2008) state that although constructivism itself is not a teaching theory, it has important impacts on education. To understand and apply these theories of constructivism into real educational practice, researchers proposed a series of constructivist learning theories, constructivist pedagogies and constructivist approaches to second language learning. Furthermore, these teaching approaches proved their positive effectiveness on second language learning and teaching (Gray, 1997; Honebein, 1996; Richardson, 1997; Shah, 2007). Hence, the belief that constructivism has large impacts on instructing language learning encourages the researcher of the present study to go into greater depth on the basis of a constructivist approach to the instruction of second language learning.

2.1.1.2 Constructivist Approaches in L2 Learning

Constructivism is an epistemological theory that shares common presumptions about knowledge and learning. Constructivist is the name given to theories of learning based on the epistemological theory; its theories share common assumptions about the construction of knowledge and the nature of learning, and they have implications for pedagogy and instruction (Swan, 2005). Constructivist theories state that students do not only need to use their processing skills to construct their own language knowledge individually and socially, but also need a learning environment (Flynn, 2005). Hence, teachers may provide a setting, pose challenges, and offer support which can encourage language learners' cognitive construction, and transform their group discussions into meaningful communication about target language knowledge.

Richardson (2003) raised a constructivist pedagogy, which is the idea of "the creation of classroom environments, activities, and methods that are grounded in a constructivist theory of learning" (p. 1627), and is the idea aiming to develop each learner's deep understanding.

In a second language (L2) learning and teaching approach, Reyes and Vallone (2008) and Richardson (2003) highlight four guiding principles for a constructivist classroom based on constructivist pedagogy, that is, learning of new information is built on prior knowledge; learning is elaborated and mediated through social interaction; doing is a part of learning; learning is a process, and teachers need

to facilitate the process. These four principles briefly describe these main focuses of constructivist approaches of L2 learning. These four guiding principles of the constructivist pedagogy are considered as the core concepts for instructing a social constructivist blog-based class of the present study.

Constructivist theories consist of two essential schools of constructivism in education: cognitive constructivism and social constructivism (Ismat, 1999; Lowenthal & Muth, 2008; Maxim, 2006; Swan, 2005).

Cognitive constructivism is also called individual constructivism. It is launched by Piaget who mainly concerns the internal development of mental structures and cognitive psychology indicating that learning occurs through the cognitive processing of schema that makes sense of them (Mayer, 1983). As an epistemologist, Piaget (1968) paid attention to knowledge and knowing. Cognitive constructivism can be called as psychological constructivism as well. Thus, cognitive constructivism mainly focuses on learners' individual understanding and their own psychological activities when they learn new information. Cognitive constructivism is very important because it provides the concept that knowledge is organized internally as mental schema, and it explains the ways that learners naturally structure and construct knowledge (Swan, 2005). As far as psychological constructivism is concerned, learning is an individual psychological activity, so teachers need to treat each individual learner equally, focus on individual's cognitive development, and support his or her interests and needs. Therefore, L2 teaching should be

learner-centered. The approach based on cognitive constructivism assumes that learners come to classes with ideas, beliefs, and opinions which need to be modified by a teacher who can facilitate this modification by giving tasks, questions or problems to learners (Ismat, 1999). Hence, in L2 teaching teachers need to create an atmosphere or environment for learners' individual critical thinking regarding activities, such as tasks, questions and problems, etc. In the present study, an idea from cognitive constructivism, called schema theory, is considered as one of the main focuses for instructing a social constructivist class.

Social constructivism was proposed by Vygotsky (1986) who stresses that all learning, coming out from social interaction and meanings of knowledge, is socially constructed through communication and interaction with others. He asserts that what decide learners to learn and understand about new information is not only due to the factor of learners' individual cognitive construction of knowledge, but also due to the factors of social activities practiced in the social environment where individuals live (Swan, 2005). Thus, according to Vygotsky (1986), without the interaction with the outside world learners may not create understanding of knowledge or learning of new knowledge. Dewey (1916) and Bruner (1986) as social constructivists also regard learning as an active process that learners construct new ideas or concepts based on their prior knowledge, and this process is an interactive activity which refers to the interaction between individuals' prior thoughts and outside factors, such as learning materials, tools, people and environments, and so on (Kim,

2006). Vygotsky (1986) believes that learning firstly occurs in a social level, and then in an individual level (Ford, 2007). Social constructivism is very important because it does not only emphasize individual's processing factors, but also clearly locate that learning is an active process of mental construction linked to interactions with the environment that impacts an individual's understanding (Swan, 2005). Therefore, L2 teaching should not only be learner-centered, but also be interactive. According to social constructivism, language teachers need to create an environment that can engage learners' in communication and interaction via independent thinking and learning. In the present study, a theory based on social constructivism, called engagement theory, is considered as the other one of the main focuses for instructing a social constructivist class. Furthermore, learning environment is highly emphasized so that the researcher creates a blog-based English learning class via the instruction of schema theory and engagement theory (see 2.1.2.2.2 on page 45).

There are differences between cognitive constructivism and social constructivism. Cognitive constructivism considers that knowledge is constructed by individuals. It only pays attention to learner's individual understanding based on his or her own prior experiences. For learning and teaching, it mainly proposes building a learner-centered environment for individual learning. However, social constructivism deems that knowledge is constructed by societies. It does not only focus on learners' individual understanding and learning, but also attach more importance to social interaction. It advocates the creation of a learner-centered environment in which peers,

instructors, or experts can get together to exchange ideas and offer help to those less skilled learners, such as an online learning classroom (Maxim, 2006). From this point of view, individual processing ideas based on cognitive constructivism is included in social constructivism.

In fact, views of both constructivists are significant to L2 learning. In the process of teaching, a teacher may not control each learner's individual processing, but may facilitate and engage learners in their own understanding and learning through social interaction. Learners acquire language by their own understanding of meaning, and they learn new knowledge on the basis of their own schema through interactions with new knowledge. Synchronously, learners can socially learn new knowledge via the interaction with others in some social settings like the classroom. Thus, this study mainly deems social constructivism as the research foundation. In a language class, the researcher needs to consider the development of learners' cognitive schema through internalization of environmental interactions. In addition, teachers may think about social aspects which determine knowledge construction, and try to engage students in social learning by setting up a sound learning environment, e.g. blog-based language learning (BALL) (see 2.1.3 on page 54).

Constructivism as the pedagogical theory has many implications for L2 teaching. It encourages teachers and researchers to introspect learning, and it recommends corresponding approaches to teaching as well, such as, communicative language teaching, problem-based learning, project-based learning, task-based

language teaching approach, cooperative language learning, collaborative learning and scaffolding approach, etc. Therefore, constructivist approaches accordingly stem from constructivist pedagogy, and proceed to lead to social constructivist approaches. Constructivist approaches in social constructivist perception suggest that teachers pay attention to the design of an active learning environment. The present study mainly focuses on a social constructivist approach because language learning and teaching largely requires learners and a teacher's social interaction. Consequently, this study mainly takes the social constructivist approach as the theoretical framework. The next sub-sections will explain the definition of a social constructivist approach and the key elements of a social constructivist approach, and will elaborate the rationale of the social constructivist approach.

2.1.1.3 Social Constructivist Approach

Theories of social constructivism are grounded on specific assumptions about reality, knowledge, and learning. In order to understand and apply theories of social constructivism to instruction, it is vital to know these assumptions that underlie them:

- Reality, to social constructivist, is constructed through people's activities and those people of a society create the context of activities (Kukla, 2000).
- Knowledge, also as a human product, is socially and culturally constructed. According to social constructivism, social

constructivists state that individuals create meaning through their interactions with each other within the environment they live (Ernest, 1999).

- Learning, to social constructivist, is a social process. Learning does not occur only within an individual, nor is it a passive filter of behaviors that are formed by external forces (McMahon, 1997). Only when individuals are involved in social activities, learning can be meaningful (Kim, 2006).

Constructivism, with a focus on social nature of cognition, suggests an approach of social constructivism. Since there is a dialectical relationship between an individual and the social context, both supplement each other and neither can exist effectively without the other (Ismat, 1999). In accordance with these assumptions mentioned above, this social constructivist approach requests teachers to: 1) offer the opportunity for constructing learners' prior knowledge and contextual meaningful experience; 2) create an environment including authentic and student-centered activities, e.g. interactive and collaborative discussion, tasks, problems, group projects or discovery learning, etc.; 3) build communities for learners to engage in activities, communication, and reflection so that students can be democratic, responsible and autonomous in the social relations (Fosnot, 1996; Gray, 1997; Lowenthal and Muth, 2008). These points of view suggest what could be beneficial to teaching and learning of languages effectively and efficiently. In the present study, the researcher deems

these three requests for teachers as the basic guidelines to create a social constructivist blog-based learning environment (see 2.1.3.3 from page 60 to 65).

According to Richards and Rodgers (1986), a teaching approach is concerned with the theory and the nature of language knowledge and learning. There are five major essential instructional components in a social constructivist approach to EFL learning and teaching in this study as follows:

- **The nature of EFL learning and teaching**

The nature of learning: cognitive constructivists consider learning as the result of constructing meaning based on individual's experience and prior knowledge; social constructivists deem learning as a dynamic and social process, and learning occurs via the construction of meaning in social interaction, within cultures, and through language (Lowenthal & Muth, 2008).

The nature of EFL teaching: in accordance with the nature of learning, the social constructivist approach implies that teachers do not only need to focus on students' individual cognitive processing of language, but also need to pay attention to their collaboration and interaction with others by using the target language. Hence, teachers are required to control the role of teachers and that of students, scaffold language knowledge to students, and build a sound environment in which students can use language to communicate with each other through proper activities, assignments and assessments.

- **The role of teachers and students**

The role of a teacher: The role of a constructivist teacher is a *guide*, a *facilitator* and a *co-explorer* who may encourage students to question, challenge, and structure their ideas and opinions via exchange (Ismat, 1999). As a facilitator, the teacher provides rich environments and learning experiences for collaborative study; as a guide, the teacher is a role that includes mediation, modeling, and coaching; and as a co-explorer, the teacher aids students to interact with the world and with other people who allow students to discover knowledge and apply skills, and students are then encouraged to reflect upon their discoveries, which is important for these students as apprentices. The teacher also plays a role of *evaluator* to assess students' progress of learning by class observation of their cooperation and interaction, assignments, and tests.

The role of students: As for the roles in a constructivist environment, students are *independent thinkers*, *question and issue developers*, *problem solvers*, *socializers*, *designers*, *authors*, and *investigators*. As independent thinkers, students need to learn and acquire language knowledge by themselves, so they need to consider learning individually; as question and issue developers, students can show their critical thinking and their learning strategies because questions and issues can help them think about knowledge deeply; there is a saying "learning by doing" under the implication of constructivism, so students as problem solvers may learn through experiencing the process of solving problems; socializers mean that students need to play roles in

communicating with others in specific situations in order to promote their communicative competence; and in some specified tasks, activities or projects, students can respectively play roles like designers, authors, and investigators and so on.

In the present study, the roles of a teacher and students are specially described in the modules of the social constructivist blog-based teaching procedures (see Table 2.1, Table 2.2 and Table 2.3 from page 67 to 70).

- **Learner-centeredness**

Teaching should be learner-centered and it is one of the important principles of social constructivism, because each learner individually creates and constructs his or her own understanding or knowledge through interaction with his or her own experience (Ismat, 1999). In a learner-centered curriculum, Nunan (1988), Weimer (2002) and Massouleh and Jooneghani (2012) emphasize learner-autonomy, which requires students to take their responsibility for their own learning; makes students express themselves; and asks students to form a self-assessment learning habit to help each other check their understanding on knowledge they learn, e.g. check each other's reflection papers from reading classes. In this learning process, communicative interaction was involved in this learner-centered class, in which students may expand their own schema by interacting with the teacher and peers (Nunan, 1988). A learner-centered language class should be created in a communicative learning environment, in which many communicative activities are brought in class to be used to engage students in active learning process (Nunan, 1988). Furthermore,

negotiations and consultations between the teacher and students should be stressed in class. So, a teacher in the learner-centered class should be a facilitator first to assign students some meaningful questions, tasks and activities in order to engage them in working and communicate together so that they could learn from each other; and then walk around the class to help students, e.g. answer their questions, give feedbacks and suggestions and tell them the truth of knowledge points (Nunan, 1988; Weimer, 2002; Hensen, 2003; Kim, 2008). A learner-centered language class requires teachers to facilitate students' language four skills including listening, speaking, reading and writing mutually by meaningful tasks and activities (Nunan, 1988). Moreover, collaborative learning involving group and pair work may be beneficial to students because they can learn from each other by social interaction (Nunan, 1988). At last, learner-community plays an important role in a learner-centered language class because classroom learning should link to authentic life, that is, outside the classroom (Nunan, 1988). These characteristics above present specific learner-centered measures for teaching and learning. According to Nunan (1988), for the learner-autonomy, one of characteristics of learner-centeredness, students need to decide their own goals of learning; however, the present study does not ask students to do so, because of a limitation of their English learning curriculum. In short, a learner-centered class needs collaborative efforts between a teacher and students.

- **EFL learning and teaching environment**

According to Kim (2008), a sound environment for learning and teaching should: 1) be authentic to integrate multiple language skills and usage; 2) make learners participate and reinforce their cognitive development; 3) help students become independent learners by leading them to explore and discover knowledge content; 4) engage students in interacting with their environment, participate in constructing knowledge; 5) encourage students to “explore information or resources and co-construct knowledge with peers” (p. 245); 6) create a collaborative and high motivated learning environment; 7) provide tools for “meaning making, exploring, critical thinking and collaborating” (p. 253); 8) build students’ democracy; and 9) let “students control their own learning process by fostering collaborative and interactive learning” (p. 255). Some of these nine conditions for creating a sound constructivist environment were previously proposed by Jonassen (1994, 1999). Basing on these conditions of the constructivist environment, teachers may carefully think about ways for students to be enjoyably involved in the environment. For instance, creating class organizations or communities can make “people learn from one another, and continually attempt to improve” (Bransford et al., 2000, p. 1). The classroom community environment can be a computer-assisted language learning class. For example, a teacher gets students involved in a web-based classroom, in which students get together to discuss and share ideas of the teacher’s assignments, tasks and projects, etc.

- **Language classroom activities**

Learning activities in constructivist settings are characterized by active engagement, inquiry, problem solving and collaboration with others (Ismat, 1999). A constructivist class demands students to acquire knowledge and skills by carrying out tasks which need higher-order thinking, and to expand and develop prior knowledge by linking with new learning (Rowell & Palmer, 2007). Thus, activities in the classroom environment are essential to language learning. Teacher's authentic questions, tasks and projects can get students involved in the process of critical thinking and the revelation of learning by doing. In these processes of doing, students can find questions and solutions, and create more meaningful ideas. For example, in some EFL multilevel activities like jigsaw reading, the teacher firstly divides the whole class into small groups, and distributes papers to each group with an intact reading text. The text is cut into different parts, and each student can get only one part of the text. Then, the teacher asks students to read the piece of paper that they just got, and let them exchange the content of the paper orally with others within their own group. After students finish their discussion, the teacher asks questions, and makes them race to be the first to answer these questions. The group who answers most questions will get small rewards or be counted in the scores of their evaluation. The EFL multilevel activities also include information gap, buddy reading and peer editing, etc.

In language learning and teaching, a social constructivist approach concerns many aspects of the content. In EFL learning, students may realize their own

internalization of knowledge and participations in the process of social interaction (Alzahrani & Woollard, 2013). In EFL teaching, a social constructivist instructor needs to know the nature of language learning, control the roles of students, build a wonderful atmosphere and setting, and develop more authentic meaningful activities and assessments for students. Therefore, a social constructivist teacher may not only have adequate content knowledge, but also possess flexible qualities of teaching techniques.

2.1.1.4 Rationale of the Social Constructivist Approach

The present study regards a social constructivist approach as the core idea to instruct teaching of reading. Social constructivism is important because it proposes a new viewpoint for social science and educational methodology, and makes a positive impact on the development of psychology and education; it has significant implications for language teaching; and it reveals that the nature of language learning is constructed by learners' external communication and internal interaction with the outside world (Beck & Kosnik, 2006). However, the thoughts of social constructivism have not been widely introduced to national education. As the statement of problems presented in Chapter 1 (see 1.2 from page 8 to 14), English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' reading comprehension makes little progress according to the national English test's results (see 1.2.1 on page 8). The reasons may due to the deficient educational environments and the teaching concepts (see 1.2.2 and 1.2.3 from page 9 to 14). Thus, the researcher raises a social constructivist approach in order to solve the problems.

A social constructivist approach based on social constructivism is extremely important because it reminds people that learning is essentially a social activity, and that meaning is constructed through communication, collaborative activities and interactions with others; and it highlights the role of social interactions in meaning construction, and the functions of other people in knowledge construction (Swan, 2005; Wilson & Yang, 2007). Therefore, grounded on social constructivism, the teaching concept may consider making students engage in social interaction (Brigham et al, 2007).

A social constructivist approach requires teachers to create a reciprocal environment for promoting individuals' collaborative learning as well as personal understanding (Ford, 2007). Thus, the researcher needs to create a sound learning and teaching environment for reading classes. Computer-assisted language learning (CALL) can facilitate language learning and also provide a proper environment for learners and teachers (Levy, 2000; Warschauer, 2000; Feng, 2006; Zheng, 2006). The researcher in the present study designs a blog-based reading environment under the instruction of a social constructivist approach.

The present researcher believes that social constructivism can explain the nature of language learning, and also promote students' EFL learning. Reading, as an important skill of EFL learning, also needs to be improved. A social constructivist approach based on social constructivism may help EFL readers find out the nature of reading so that their enthusiasm, attitudes, and motivation are highly raised, and their reading comprehension is hopefully promoted. Therefore, a social constructivist

approach can be deemed as the foundational framework for instructing the researcher to create and build a wonderful learning atmosphere and environment for students in order to engage them in active social interaction. Thus, the study is hopeful to boost EFL learning and teaching.

2.1.2 EFL Reading Comprehension

2.1.2.1 Definition of Reading Comprehension

As for the four skills of language, reading is especially important because reading is assumed to be the central skill to learn new information (Grabe & Stoller, 2001).

Reading is a complex cognitive process that shaped by the reader's prior knowledge, experiences, attitude, and language community which is culturally and socially situated (Langer, 1990). Zhang (1993) defined that "reading is an essential way of obtaining information in contemporary society" (p. 3). In addition, the complexity of the reading process is cognitively demanding because learners need to coordinate attention, perception, memory, and comprehension (Sellers, 2000). Thus, reading is the process of understanding the meaning through the written text. Readers need former experiences and the language knowledge to support their comprehension.

Thuswise, what is reading comprehension? Hill (2011) states that "comprehension is recognized as an acquired skill that is focused on the understanding of input, and comprehension is the ability to take in information, analyze it in its respective segments, and come up with an understanding of the input in a cohesive and accurate manner" (p. 62).

By analyzing the standpoints above, reading comprehension is the level that readers understand literal reading materials, and reading comprehension comes from the interaction between readers and reading materials.

2.1.2.2 Theories of Reading to Teachers' Instruction

Reading comprehension is an essential part of EFL learning and teaching. Teachers' instruction of reading comprehension plays a vital role in EFL teaching. Two main reading theories referring to cognitive constructivism and social constructivism are discussed in this study to help the researcher build the theoretical framework: *schema theory* and *engagement theory*.

2.1.2.2.1 Schema Theory

Reading is deemed as a complex process which refers to the linguistic knowledge, background knowledge, decoding ability and a series of strategies to understand and interact with a text (Behjat, 2011; Ramli et al., 2011). The term "schema" was firstly introduced by Piaget (1926), and it means a learner's prior knowledge, experience, and background. Schema as the prior knowledge obtained through experiences affects EFL learners' reading comprehension (Singhal, 1998). Schema in language reading process plays an important role in helping readers comprehend texts.

From Piaget's perspective of constructivism, a reader makes use of his or her own schema to construct meanings and to understand a reading text. As Anderson and Pearson (1984) mentioned, this mental process requires an

interaction between old knowledge and new knowledge in a text. “The ability to read effectively requires effort from the reader in making mental connections between text and his existing knowledge” (Ramli et al., 2011, p. 196). This statement describes that, after a reader stores plentiful schema in his or her head, he or she uses a way of mental process to interact the existed schema with information on the reading text. “When the reader manages to find the link or a place for this new information, comprehension is achieved” (Ramli et al., 2011, p. 196). In other words, reading comprehension is the process of interaction between readers and target texts (Rumelhart, 1980).

In general, there are three major types of schemata related to reading comprehension, which are linguistic schemata, formal schemata and content schemata (Li et al., 2007). Linguistic schemata are related to language proficiency, such as vocabulary, grammar and idioms and so on, which are important to text comprehension. Formal schemata are the organizational forms and rhetorical structures of written texts, e.g. text types and genres, language structures, vocabulary, grammar and level of formality, discourse, etc. And content schemata refer to the background knowledge including cultural knowledge and previous experience and so on. Behjat (2011) emphasizes that “the stronger a learner’s background knowledge is, the more comprehension will be achieved through reading” (p. 240). Therefore, students’ schema is needed to be broadened as much as possible. According to the schema theory, teachers’ instruction of reading comprehension aiming to broaden

students' prior knowledge gains a specific guidance based on the detailed content of these three types of schemata.

According to Vygotsky's social constructivism, learners can build and expand their schema via communicating and interacting with other people who can scaffold the learners' schema in this learning process (MacVee et al., 2005). Learners use schema to communicate with others, and the process of interaction and communication relies on their own schema (Patricia, 1986). The social constructivists deem collaborative communication and social interaction as a central idea of language learning (Wilson & Yang, 2007). Furthermore, as mentioned above, the more a reader's schema is expanded, the more his or her reading comprehension can be facilitated (Behjat, 2011). Therefore, a reading class based on the central idea of social constructivism may engage students in constructing and expanding their own schema mutually.

Therefore, a reader's schema is the foundation of understanding reading texts. In the process of learning reading, the interaction between the reader and target texts and the interaction between the reader's schema and others' schema need teachers to facilitate the interaction. In the present study, the teacher may use technologies to build an interactive learning environment and provide scaffolding tasks or projects to help learners construct solid schema. The next theory is going to introduce how to make reading learning interactive.

2.1.2.2.2 Engagement Theory

According to Kearsley and Schneiderman (1998), students' learning should be engaged in meaningful activities by interaction with other people or tasks, problems and projects. Engaged readers are usually equipped with high motivation, critical thinking and social communication that they can share what they have read with other people (Tracey & Morrow, 2006). Engagement theory aims to build collaborative teams who work on interesting activities that are meaningful to them in and outside the classroom. Furthermore, students must be actively engaged through interaction with others in those learning activities. Grounded on the engagement theory, teachers may engage learners in an active reading process through building a collaborative learning environment in which learners could purposefully accomplish missions by social interaction.

In social constructivism, learning occurs in interaction with other people (Vygotsky, 1986). Therefore, reading comprehension can happen when students learn a text by interacting with others. The engagement theory suggests that the reading process of decoding, comprehension, and metacognition could be enhanced through social interaction (Guthrie, 1996). Postmes et al. (2005) and Behjat (2011) in their research studies found that collaborative interaction in the form of group work can boost students' reading comprehension, and the effectiveness of this collaborative interaction is better than that of single individual reading. In their studies each group consists of several students getting together to discuss topics, share

their ideas, and scaffold understanding with each other. In the group work, teachers provide some questions, tasks or activities for students. Moreover, teachers need to take part in their reading process as a facilitator and co-explorer to interact with students. Brigham et al. (2007) stress that teachers are required to use an instruction through interaction and participation in small group work instead of developing students' comprehension one by one with each other. Therefore, teachers may mainly pay attention to create a collaborative environment for students' social interaction of reading comprehension.

For achieving the environments of collaboration, Kearsley and Schneiderman (1998) suggested teachers utilizing computer technologies to facilitate social interaction of learning. Moreover, the engagement theory can be seen as the framework for the technology-based teaching and learning (Kearsley & Schneiderman, 1998; Piki, 2011).

Based on the analyses proposed above, there are two aspects of teacher's instruction in reading comprehension: expanding schema; engaging learners in an active reading process. The two parts of instruction need to be integrated because social constructivism do not only emphasize that learning happens interactively, but also stresses prior-knowledge-based (schema) learning process. Both are mutually beneficial to each other so that the knowledge learning can be consolidated. In this study, the teacher is attempting to use these instructions to teach different reading materials in accordance with specific curriculums.

2.1.2.3 A Social Constructivist Instructional Approach to Reading Comprehension

Constructivists regard reading comprehension as learning that refers to an individual interactive practice. A reader constructs meaning of a reading material by utilizing a combination of information on the text and his or her own prior knowledge (schema) (Edington, 2007; Wilson & Yang, 2007). According to social constructivists, reading comprehension can be a social interactive practice as well. A reader constructs understanding of a reading material by exchanging ideas with other readers. Therefore, a constructivist teacher may deliberate what approaches or strategies could promote students' reading comprehension and how to build an appropriate environment for a reading class. This learning environment can be a blog-based classroom.

Based on the social constructivist approach, the present study mainly focuses on *scaffolding* and *collaborative learning*, which are grounded on the reading theories of *schema theory* and *engagement theory* in order to construct a blog-based reading environment in which the modules of *reading*, *writing* and *responding* are included.

2.1.2.3.1 Scaffolding

Peregoy and Boyle (1997) explain that “scaffolding means the setting up of temporary supports that permit learners to take part in the complicated process of comprehending before they can do it without assistance” (as

cited in Behjat, 2011, p. 240). Wilson and Yang (2007) indicate that, “when the building is strong enough, the scaffolding can be removed and the building will remain strong and stable” (p. 52), and teachers can gradually quit the support or assist if students are able to equip themselves with some specific abilities to comprehend target texts. Moreover, learning happens in the process of building the support and assistance. Social constructivism stresses that learning is a social interactive process. Therefore, scaffolding needs interaction among a teacher and students.

As discussed in 2.1.2.2.1 (on page 42), a reader’s schema is an essential component in reading comprehension. Schema theory is grounded on cognitive constructivism. Moreover, cognitive constructivism is the foundation of social constructivism. The instruction of social constructivism requires social interaction among readers so that their own schema can be built and expanded. According to Vygotsky’s (1978) zone of proximal development (ZPD), social constructivists suggest that students’ schema should be scaffolded in the process of learning. Thus, the approach of scaffolding may help learners expand their schema through social interaction (Galguera & Nicholson, 2010).

Scaffolding is a term relevant to various and flexible formats of support or assist provided by an instructor or more capable peers (Edington, 2007). Thus, engaging learners in completing a task or solving a problem may enhance learning achievement (Bonk & Cunningham, 1998). Furthermore, scaffolding is an important instruction of EFL reading because it can “clarify the purpose and give

clear and step-by-step instructions, promote cooperative tasks so students are attuned to helping rather than competing, and give positive affective attitude encouraging safe relationships” (Mariani, 1997, p. 2). Thus, it is essential to know how to scaffold students’ schema of reading comprehension.

Scaffolding refers to the support provided by others, e.g. parents, peers, teachers or reference sources such as dictionaries. In a reading classroom only the teacher and students are involved; therefore there are two ways of scaffolding presented in the reading classroom: teacher scaffolding, and peers scaffolding.

- **Teacher scaffolding**

This kind of scaffolding needs a teacher to engage students in constructing their own *schema* for reading comprehension. In scaffolding learners’ schema, the teacher may provide linguistic schemata, formal schemata and content schemata for reading comprehension, which refer to vocabulary, grammar, and context background, and so on (Anderson et al., 1978; Walqui, 2006).

The teacher is also required to facilitate a reading classroom by using some *tools*. Hill (2011, pp. 63-64) in her article analyzed that:

“Literal reading comprehension cannot account for abstract information such as tone and irony, so reorganization is simply an extension of this, being literal in its own right; and evaluation, prediction, personal experience, and inference are not possible without an adequate knowledge of the subject matter, in both parsing word for word and in depth contextually as a whole. To add to this, none of these types of comprehension accounts for cultural factors, which can be problematic when attempting to look at L2 reading patterns across various cultures. ”

Therefore, understanding and learning of reading comprehension may be scaffolded by some teaching tools. Bradley and Bradley (2004) suggest that teachers use visual tools as a way of scaffolding, for example, graphic organizers, tables, outlines, graphs, pictures, online learning tools, etc.

Challenging activities such as teachers' questions, games, tasks, problems or projects for readers can largely scaffold their learning because these activities challenge students to perform beyond their current capacity (Hammond & Gibbons, 2001).

- **Peers scaffolding**

Peers scaffolding means that scaffolding occurs among students via their interactions and collaboration with each other. This way needs students to scaffold their *schema* with each other. Different student has different prior knowledge, and thus peers' social interaction can help them construct mutual knowledge (Kathryn, 1998).

Collaborative activities among peers include asking questions, sharing their ideas and taken-notes, giving comments or suggestions, solving problems, and providing explanations and examples. These activities demand students to be willing to participate in communication.

Students may use *electronic tools* to contact with peers to discuss contents of reading via phone-callings and the linking of the Internet by computers, e.g. emails, chatting rooms, webs, blogs and videoconferencing, etc. (Bonk & Cunningham, 1998).

Scaffolding nowadays has been seen as a teaching approach of social constructivists. Therefore, in reading classes, teacher's instruction may take the scaffolding between teacher-to-students and students-to-students into consideration. In the next section, the researcher will introduce an approach called collaborative learning. Collaborative learning can be integrated with scaffolding in this study. Scaffolding and collaborative learning can be beneficial to each other, because they both are respectively grounded on schema theory and engagement theory. Furthermore, the both theories in social constructivist perspectives are relatively complemented. An efficient learner should be basically equipped with prior knowledge, and he or she also should be engaged in effective interaction with instructors or peers. Thus, collaborative learning needs to be considered in this study.

2.1.2.3.2 Collaborative Learning

According to Smith and MacGregor (1992), collaborative learning is a general term for some teaching approaches that involve students' joint efforts, which make a teacher and students work in pairs or groups to explore understanding, solutions or meanings, or create a contribution according to course materials. Dillenbourg (1999) stressed that collaborative learning needs the learning environment where pairs or groups learn something together. They all largely emphasize students' engagement in discussions and their active work according to a course material.

In a social constructivist approach, collaborative learning refers to a process of student-to-student or student-to-teacher interaction facilitated by the teacher (Alzahrani & Woollard, 2013). In this process, collaborative activities allow students to explain their understanding to others, and the explanation can engage students in reorganizing and internalizing their knowledge (Boxtel et al., 2000). Engagement theory emphasizes that the understanding of a reading text can happen in the process of collaborative learning because students will be engaged in the interaction of tasks or activities related to the reading (Tracey & Morrow, 2006). For reading comprehension, collaborative learning may offer students purposeful, meaningful and authentic activities to interact their information, ideas or skills in pairs or groups to work in a common endeavor. Utilizing technologies is an effective way to assist collaborative learning (Bennett, 2003). CALL may supply learners with a learning environment in which they can experience a virtual journey about the context of a reading text and they can also connect with other students or experts and access to interesting source data that help them understand more, etc.

In a reading classroom only a teacher and students are involved; therefore there are mainly two ways of creating a collaborative learning: peer-to-peer collaboration, and peer-to-expert collaboration.

- **Peer-to-peer collaboration**

As its name implies, peer-to-peer collaboration means the collaborative learning between or among students. These students with similar levels of reading

comprehension work together and achieve a goal or task that is assigned by the instructor. For instance, a teacher in the classroom asks students to answer questions and share their ideas in pairs or in groups. After the students finish discussion and synthesize their answers, representatives from each pair or group give the answers to the class. This way of collaboration does not need students to accomplish challenging activities.

- **Peer-to-expert collaboration**

As its name suggests, peer-to-expert collaboration means the collaborative learning between a student and an expert or among students and experts. In a classroom, the expert can be the teacher, or higher level students. This way emphasizes the higher level people (experts) to help lower level students achieve a task or work, and then these lower level students can finally reach a certain level. In the learning activities, each pair or group is required to have at least one “expert”. For example, a teacher in a blogging part of reading course leaves students a task to write their own reflection papers from a reading article, then asks the expert in each pair or group to help the lower level students correct their vocabulary use and grammar mistakes. Thus, in this way, the students can effectively obtain some specific knowledge and learn from the “expert”. The activities assigned by the instructor should be challenging and interesting. If a teacher knows the utilization of CALL in reading classes, he or she may expand the chances of the collaborative learning.

This part described an instructional teaching approach to reading based on the perceptions of social constructivism, such as scaffolding and collaborative

learning for instructing reading. In the next part, the researcher will detailedly introduce a tool for building a teaching environment according to the social constructivist instructional approach to a reading class.

2.1.3 Blog-Assisted Language Learning (BALL)

2.1.3.1 Definition of BALL

BALL is the abbreviation of blog-assisted language learning, which is referred to the blogs use of the Web 2.0 technique of website of computer technologies to facilitate language learning and teaching (Mynard, 2007).

Rainie (2005) describes that many people know how to use blogs, but they do not know what blog is. It is necessary to trace the history of a blog in order to get a better understanding of its definitions. In 1992, Tim Berners Lee, the founder of the World Wide Web (WWW), created a personal webpage called *What's New*, which is the origin and the initial state of weblog (Dvorak, 2005). In 1994, more and more personal webpages were coined with online diaries, of which topics were various, such as diets, movies, and politics and so on (Sullivan, 2005). In 1997, one of the original specialized weblog was created by Jorn Barger, and he defined weblog as “a webpage where a weblog logs all the other Webpage he or she finds interesting” (Wyld, 2008, p. 82). In 1999, weblog was changed to short-term *blog* by Peter Merholz, and he divided the noun *weblog* to the phrase *we blog*. Blog here is a verb, and it means to post things on one's weblog (Blood, 2004). In the same year, Evan Williams created an easier-edited software to simply update his own website, and he made the software become the foundation of today's *blogger.com*, which is one of the

first blogs in the world (Ramos, 2004). In 2002, blog reached its turning point and grew from a self-contained community to a broader worldwide phenomenon (Manjoo, 2002). Since 2008, with the development of the Internet speed and Web 2.0 technologies, blogs have become more and more attractive and easier to use (Wyld, 2008; Carney, 2009).

Ward (2004) defines a blog as “a website that is updated regularly and organized chronically according to date, and in reverse order from most recent entry backwards” (p. 1). Gallo (2004) regards a blog as “the next big thing on the Internet”. Sullivan (2005) claims that “blog is the most profound revolution in publishing since the printing press”. Later, Wyld (2008) proposes that “blog is an easy-to-use content management tool, which enables a person to instantly add content to a website, via a web interface, without the necessity of any special technical or programming skills” (p. 93). Carney (2009) describes that blog is a Home Web for each user to post journals, news, research, and business and so on, and it not only offers a special place and center that includes other links of tools and media for communication, but also provides an updatable template for reading and writing.

Integrating these definitions above, the blog (or weblog) is a webpage that provides personal diary or journal for users to write their own articles, agendas and feelings, and so on; meanwhile, users can read articles from others' blogs. Furthermore, blogs are the websites that can be easily created, designed, and updated by users. Blogs also allow users to publish instantly and constantly on the Internet

from any Internet connection without little computer programming skills. Each blog user can communicate with others by commenting on others' published modules, such as texts, links, videos, audios, and pictures etc. Nowadays, more and more new content is added to blogs, for instance, polling, games, e-portfolios and other kinds of blog subcontents (Richardson, 2009). According to Editor-in-Chief of U.S. News & World Report, "Blogs are transforming the way Americans get information and think about important issues. It is a revolutionary change, and there is no turning back" (Wyld, 2008, p. 86). In the near future, blogs will be developed and they can provide more opportunities for research of personal or public communication effectiveness and knowledge management (Wyld, 2008).

To generalize the characteristics of blogs, teachers and students can be supported by using blogs to learn language, because the blogs consist of students' or teachers' reflections and conversations with many topics updated every day. Moreover, blogs provide students opportunities to share ideas, questions and links to the teacher and other students; and students are asked to think and give responses by posting or commenting (Richardson, 2009). Blogs offer an interactive and constructivist approach, which can promote students' critical thinking; besides, blogs can enhance and deepen students' language learning in that students can write their own articles or read articles written by teachers or other students; meanwhile, students' language learning can be facilitated with the help of blogs by posting or commenting their own ideas on the blogs (Ward, 2004; Mynard, 2007; Richardson, 2009; Taki & Khazaei, 2011).

2.1.3.2 Benefits of BALL for Reading Comprehension

Nowadays, with the application of Web 2.0 tools, weblogs have already provided the use of communication, construction, and research by posting or commenting their own ideas on the blogs (Ward, 2004; Mynard, 2007; Richardson, 2009; Taki & Khazaei, 2011). Furthermore, Web 2.0 technologies provide many new opportunities and environments for language learners by using specialized learning software, word processing programs, emails, videos, text chats and web pages, such as blogs and wikis and so on, and they promote learners' and instructors' collaborative and interactive communication (Carney, 2009).

Raith (2009) analyzed whether blogs can change learning situation in a foreign language writing class. Firstly, he was aware that many students and teachers can use their own PCs to do many things, such as learning, entertaining, and playing games. Then, he discovered that blogs under Web 2.0 techniques can bring many advantages to teaching and learning, such as creating an online language learning community in which teachers not only can initiate students to communicate, collaborate and interact with other students or teachers in language learning process, but also can serve students and teachers as an important information source. Finally, he found that blogs under Web 2.0 techniques demand students to understand other articles, and also need them to possess the writing ability to reflect and express their feelings. Consequently, from students' comments on their own blogs, these writings can reflect students' critical and analytical thinking, and refer to their interaction with articles and these writers (Richardson, 2009).

Carney (2009) also discussed potential advantages of Web 2.0 blogs and analyzed the impacts on the application of blogs in foreign language education. He states that Web 2.0 technique can be a revolution of foreign language education, which refers to the change of the situation of linguistic and intercultural foreign language learning. According to Campbell (2003), blogs can not only be used in language teaching and learning, but also can provide learners an environment to read and a community of class space to discuss and interact. Students can read in the instructor's blog and then use individual blogs to write (Carney, 2007). Campbell (2003) also pointed out that blogs can offer four elements facilitating foreign language learning: motivation, authenticity, collaboration, and literacy.

Since 2005, more and more research studies have given considerable attention to BALL (e.g. Arani, 2005; Jones & Nuhfer-Halten, 2006; Pinkman & Bortolin, 2006; Bloch, 2007; Carney, 2007; Hann, 2007; Mynard, 2007; Alm, 2009; Carney, 2009; Raith, 2009; Rashtchi & Hajihassani, 2010; Murugaiah et al., 2010; Fageeh, 2011; and Bendriss, 2012). These studies all agreed that BALL largely, positively and significantly influences foreign language learning and teaching no matter what aspects are referred, for instance, reading, writing, vocabulary, grammar and culture. Meanwhile, blogs presented above have many common advantages for second language reading learning and teaching. The benefits are summarized below:

- supporting learners with large reading and writing practice, reflecting, commenting, questioning, reviewing and communicating with teacher and peers in an authentic environment;
- offering personal space to read and write;
- being learner-centered;
- providing immediate feedback and friendly language learning atmosphere;
- promoting critical and analytical thinking, and self-expression and positive attitude and motivation; and
- combining reflection and interaction in an effective way.

These benefits of blogs can support the EFL learning environment as well. Therefore, blogs do not only provide EFL learners a setting of social constructivism, but also support the main factors that facilitate reading comprehension.

In the next part, the researcher will introduce a tool with the *blog modules of reading, writing and responding* to build a sound teaching and learning environment according to the social constructivist instructional approach to reading classes in details.

2.1.3.3 Modules of BALL for Reading, Writing and Responding

As discussed in 2.1.2.2.1 (on page 42), to fully comprehend a reading text, *schema* has a fundamental role to play. For an advanced reader, he or she needs to be *engaged* in some relevant activities to think about the text critically (as discussed in 2.1.2.2.2 on page 45). According to a social constructivist approach, reading comprehension does not only need a reader's individual processing of a text, but also require his or her further understanding of the text through interacting thoughts with the author, or with other people's ideas. Therefore, a social instructional approach is proposed to support reading classes. *Scaffolding* may help learners expand their schema; *collaborative learning* may engage them in a deeper understanding of a text. Thus, teachers to a large extent need a sound environment to support the social instructional approach to facilitating reading. What environment can facilitate students to understand a text and provide their social interaction with other people? CALL may be the answer. As mentioned in 2.1.3.2 (on page 57), a blog can supply many benefits to reading and it reaches the level of the social constructivist approach to instructing reading.

Vygotsky emphasizes that language can help learners to organize thoughts, and people use language to learn, communicate and share their own experience with others. Learners absorb knowledge and obtain ideas from reading. Writing is a way that people share feelings, experiences and thoughts with the world. Reading and writing need individual and social interaction with texts

according to social constructivism. Learners can write and communicate through responding to reading texts. Therefore, there is an interrelationship among reading, writing and responding. For a blog-based reading class, there are mainly three modules in this research:

2.1.3.3.1 Reading

In a reading blog module, the teacher mainly considers what will be used to expand students' schema as large as possible in advance. Hartsell and Yuen (2006) pointed out that *pictures*, *audios* and *videos* can largely assist students' understanding. Blogs can offer a place for the teacher to post the main text with relevant pictures, audios and videos to scaffold students' context background knowledge. Furthermore, the teacher can prepare specific new words and grammar rules for students to use in their own understanding. After students' schema is well-prepared, the teacher can post the *main reading article* on the blog. Students may have different reading styles, that is to say, some of them may not be used to reading on the computer; therefore, the teacher should pay attention to the *fonts*, *sizes*, *colors*, *symbols*, *line styles*, and *shadings* of the main reading text on the blog.

On a blog, learners may understand texts by watching videos and pictures, and they can discuss what reading texts the teacher did post on the blog. Hence, in the process of teaching, the reading module in a blog mainly focuses on scaffolding learners understanding of a text via posting some related information, such as vocabulary, videos and pictures; and the reading module may engage them in

discussing and interacting about the target reading content including vocabulary, grammar and culture, etc.

2.1.3.3.2 Writing

According to Granham and Hebert (2010), “writing has the theoretical potential for enhancing reading” (p. 4) and there are 3 major reasons of the importance of writing for reading: 1) writing and reading are connected with one another because they use “common knowledge and cognitive processes” (Shanahan, 2006, as cited in Granham & Hebert, 2010, p. 4), and they can be combined to accomplish special tasks; 2) writing a text can provide readers with “means for recording, connecting, analyzing, personalizing, and manipulating key ideas from the text” (p. 4); and 3) reading and writing are involved in interaction activities, which leads readers to better comprehend texts. Therefore, for reading comprehension, writing activities are ways to foster thinking and learning of a text. Moreover, writing is a way to reflect students’ critical thinking of reading.

As a developed stage of reading comprehension, writing is a formal way for speaking and communication. There are 4 main approaches to writing up a reading text: 1) write a *reaction paper* including analyzing and interpreting the text; 2) write a *summary* of the text; 3) take *notes* about the text; and 4) answer *questions* about the text (Granham & Hebert, 2010).

Furthermore, writing is not only the way for readers to express feelings and thoughts about a reading text, but also one of the approaches to

interaction and communication in the view of social constructivism. Thus, a fifth approach to writing about a reading text refers to *discussion in short words*. These five ways are implications for guiding readers to reflect their understanding from reading. Therefore, teachers may need a specific environment to engage writing. For example, in a blog teaching environment, the teacher can make students read on the blog and write down their reaction, summary, notes, answers for questions or discussions on the commenting board of the blog. The process of writing comments is also a way to interact and communicate with others.

2.1.3.3.3 Responding

Responding in the views of social constructivism refers to an individual's psychological process. After the social interaction of reading, the reader uses a way to think about the reading material. This way of thinking is called as responding, which is an essential way for reading comprehension because it involves a reader's higher-order thinking or critical thinking which can help the reader think beyond vocabulary and discourse of the text and facilitate deeper understanding (Barnet & Bedau, 2010).

Mynyk (2005) describes that responding needs readers' critical analysis of a reading text, in which the readers express "*feelings, thoughts, reactions, questions about situations, ideas, actions, characters, settings, symbols, plot, theme and any other elements*"(p. 8), and make a *summary*, etc. Mickler (2011) suggests that the readers "relate personal experiences which connect with the plot, characters or events" (p.

5) in the content of texts. Moreover, readers are supposed to consider about what, how, and why the author of the reading text wants to convey to audiences (Tulloh & Napthine, 2010). EFL teachers may promote learners reading comprehension by utilizing these approaches to responding to a reading text mentioned above in classes.

Responding is connected to speaking and writing, because readers need to respond to a reading text by speaking and writing. When the readers respond to speaking or writing, the responding is shifted to a social process. Therefore, responding does not only relate to personal brain activities, but also to social activities. Teachers may set up an environment for learners to respond to reading individually and socially. For instance, in a blog-based environment, a teacher can post some specific reading texts on his or her blog such as a narrative article, and then asks students to describe characters, events, or themes, and write a summary of the article. Students can give answers on the teacher's blog and write what they want to express on their own blogs. After that, teachers and other students visit each other's blogs and post their comments or evaluations on the blogs (Windham, 2007).

In the present study, the researcher may modify a common blog to a social constructivist BALL, which explains how a teacher teaches a reading text via the modules of BALL based on the social instructional constructivist approach (simply called social constructivist BALL). The social constructivist BALL may be more effective and efficient because it provides specific procedures and a timeframe for teaching a reading text according to the instruction of scaffolding and

collaborative learning approaches. In order to make the social constructivist BALL teaching modules clearer and understandable, the researcher designs 3 tables (see Table 2.1, Table 2.2, and Table 2.3 from page 63 to 67) demonstrating 3 teaching procedures (including “before reading”, “while reading” and “after reading”) in which the researcher will control the teaching of a reading text in a reading class.

In the process of implementing the modules of the social constructivist BALL, firstly, the researcher divides students into groups. Each group consists of a group leader student with a higher English proficiency level and other several students (no more than 6 students) with different English proficiency levels. Thus, the teacher may control the groups of students by utilizing the social instructional constructivist approach of peer scaffolding, and peer-to-expert and peer-to-peer collaborative learning. Secondly, the researcher puts the teaching procedures for reading into 3 steps, which are, “before reading”, “while reading” and “after reading”. Lastly, the researcher can teach every reading text by following the steps, approaches, instructions, assigned activities according to the 3 tables below.

The tables below summarize the procedures and timings of each section consisting of blog modules implementation, the approach utilization, the conduct of teacher’s instruction and students’ activities, a teacher’s and students’ roles and the required theories. The following three tables below separately demonstrate how to teach a reading text by “before reading” (Table 2.1), “while reading” (Table 2.2) and “after reading” (Table 2.3) steps.

In the step of “before reading” (see Table 2.1 below), there are mainly two modules including *reading* and *responding* within around 30 minutes to accomplish in classroom. In the *reading* module, the teacher needs to use scaffolding approach to scaffolding students’ schema by utilizing the teacher’s blog tools including pictures or videos to make students familiar with knowledge about vocabulary, grammar and culture of the specific reading content. In this module, the teacher also needs to control the role of himself or herself as a facilitator and of students as independent thinkers. In the *responding* module, the teacher needs to apply peer-to-peer collaboration approach to engaging pairs or groups of students in active discussion and communication so that students can learn together to acquaint with the target schema mutually. In this module, the teacher also needs to control the role of himself or herself as a co-explorer and of students as problem solvers and socializers. The timing for procedures may be flexible because the teacher can ask students to accomplish the module of reading before class.

Table 2.1 The Modules of the Social Constructivist BALL for Teaching a Reading Text -Before Reading Part

Step	Module	Approach	Instruction	Students Activities	Tasks
Before reading in class	<i>Reading</i> (10 mins)	teacher <u>scaffolding</u>	use the <i>teacher's blog</i> videos or pictures to initiate understanding	students as independent thinkers to be familiar with knowledge about vocabulary, grammar and culture	the teacher as a facilitator to introduce <i>schema</i> to learners
	<i>responding</i> by speaking (20 mins)	peer-to-peer <u>collaboration</u>	assign students in pairs or groups to communicate	students as problem solvers and socializers to discuss about the reading content by using knowledge learned	the teacher as a co-explorer to <i>engage</i> students to learn together to acquaint the target <i>schema</i> mutually

In the step of “while reading” (see Table 2.2 below), there is only one module called *reading* included. The target reading text can be posted on the teacher’s blog, and also can be on students’ book. The teacher needs 30 minutes to use the approach of peer-to-peer collaboration to engage students themselves in real reading activities, in which students may have jigsaw reading, information gap or buddy reading activities (see language classroom activities on page 38). Thus, students may learn together and build their own schema mutually. In this procedure, the teacher also needs to control the role of himself or herself as a co-explorer and of students as independent thinkers and question developers.

Table 2.2 The Modules of the Social Constructivist BALL for Teaching a Reading Text -While Reading Part

Step	Module	Approach	Instruction	Students Activities	Tasks
While reading in class	<i>Reading</i> (30 mins)	peer-to-peer <u>collaboration</u>	assign students in pairs or groups to read by using a main reading text posted on the <u>teacher's blog</u>	students as independent thinkers and question developers to read the text in pairs or groups in a limited time	the teacher as a co-explorer to <i>engage</i> students to learn together and to build their own <i>schema</i> mutually

The step of after reading (see Table 2.3 below) includes two sub-steps. One sub-step refers to what the teacher and students need to do *in class* followed by “while reading” step, and the other sub-step is what they need to do *after class* (can be seen as homework).

In the “after reading” step of *in class* sub-step, the teacher in classroom needs 30 minutes to use *responding* module and teacher scaffolding and peer scaffolding approaches to making students reflect and communicate what they have read in the “while reading” step. The teacher may assign tasks to students such as answering questions and solving problems to construct and expand learners’ *schema*. In this procedure, the teacher also needs to control the role of himself or herself as a guide and of students as problem solvers and socializers.

In the “after reading” step of *after class* sub-step, there are mainly three modules including *responding*, *writing* and *responding* for students to accomplish after class. After finishing teaching a reading text, the teacher needs to assign tasks to students to accomplish.

After class, in the *responding* module, the teacher needs to use peer-to-peer collaboration and peer-to-expert collaboration approaches to asking students to share feelings and ideas, and reflect their own understanding about the target text by using emoticons, words and sentences on the teacher's blog's comment board so that students can be engaged in interactive discussion and expand their own schema mutually. In this module, the teacher also needs to control the role of himself or herself as a facilitator and of students as independent thinkers, question developers, and problem solvers.

Next, in the *writing* module, the teacher needs to use peer-to-expert collaboration approach to requiring students to write their own diaries referring to summaries, reflection papers or retelling papers about the target reading content on their own blogs. Students can be in pairs and groups so that they can be *engaged* in learning interactively and expanding their *schema* mutually. In this module, the teacher also needs to control the role of himself or herself as a co-explorer and of students as independent thinkers, designers and authors.

At last, in the *responding* module, the teacher needs to use teacher scaffolding, peer scaffolding and peer-to-expert collaboration approaches to asking students to comment the diaries on each other students' blogs, and the teacher also need to write some comments on students' blogs to correct others' mistakes or to share ideas so that students can be engaged in learning from the teacher's and others' comments to expand their own schema mutually. In this module, the teacher also

needs to control the role of himself or herself as a guide and of students as independent thinkers, problem solvers, socializers, and investigators.

Table 2.3 The Modules of the Social Constructivist BALL for Teaching a Reading Text -After Reading Part

Step	Module	Approach	Instruction	Students Activities	Tasks
After reading in class	<i>responding</i> by speaking (30 mins)	teacher & peer <u>scaffolding</u>	assign tasks to students to finish during class	students as problem solvers and socializers to accomplish tasks, e.g. answer questions, solve problems, etc.	the teacher as a guide to construct and expand learners' <i>schema</i>
After reading after class	<i>responding</i> by writing on the teacher's blog (20 mins)	peer-to-peer & peer-to-expert <u>collaboration</u>	assign students in pairs or groups to share feelings, ideas, etc. on the <i>teacher's blog</i>	students as independent thinkers, question developers, and problem solvers to reflect their own understanding about the target text by using emoticons, words and sentences, etc. on the blog	the teacher as a facilitator to <i>engage</i> students to see others' comments to expand their own <i>schema</i> mutually
	<i>writing</i> on students' own blogs (50 mins)	peer-to-expert <u>collaboration</u>	leave tasks to students to accomplish writing assignments on <i>students' blogs</i>	students as independent thinkers, designers and authors to do writing assignments in pairs or groups by using knowledge learnt while class, e.g. reflection, and retelling papers, etc.	the teacher as a co-explorer to <i>engage</i> students to learn together and to expand their <i>schema</i> mutually
	<i>responding</i> by writing on other students' own blogs (20 mins)	teacher & peer <u>scaffolding</u> & peer-to-expert <u>collaboration</u>	assign students in pairs or groups to comment on each other <i>students' blogs</i>	students as independent thinkers, problem solvers, socializers, and investigators to write comments on others' blogs to correct others' mistakes or to share ideas, etc.	the teacher as a guide to <i>engage</i> students to see the teacher's and others' comments to expand their own <i>schema</i> mutually

The timing for the “after reading” step of *after class* sub-step procedures may be flexible because it is the time for doing their “homework” and the teacher cannot really control them when they need to accomplish the tasks. After finishing the whole steps teaching, the teacher grades performance to students by checking their “homework”. But the scores will not be calculated in the data of the tests of the present study.

In every step of the teaching, the modules of the social constructivist BALL can reflect a principal of a social constructivist approach, that is, learner-centeredness. For instance, learners construct their own schema for reading by blogs “before reading”, and then, they engage themselves in responding to what they have known. After that, they read a target text by their own psychological and mental processing “while reading”. At last, they do many activities to respond and consolidate what they have learnt by writing and commenting on the teacher’s and students’ blogs “after reading”.

To combine the teacher’s blog with a student’s blog (see the teacher’s blog and students’ blogs in Appendix V), the 3 tables above described an integrated process to teach a reading text by utilizing blogs modules including *reading*, *writing* and *responding* according to the social constructivist instructional approach of *scaffolding* and *collaborative learning* based on the theory of social constructivism. The modules of social constructivist BALL is hopeful to improve students’ reading comprehension by reading, writing and responding to different reading texts on blogs. What is more, commenting and writing on blogs may promote their writing skill as well.

This part proposed a teaching tool and a sound learning environment to reading based on the perceptions of social constructivism, such as the modules of blogs for reading, writing and responding for instructing reading. In the next part, some previous research studies which are related to the reading environment instructed by a social constructivist approach will be presented.

2.2 Previous Research Studies of EFL Reading Learning Environment

In recent years, a few research studies on constructivism and EFL reading learning environment are proposed from all over the world. These previous research studies below lay a solid foundation for conducting the present research study.

2.2.1 Constructivism and EFL Reading Comprehension

Constructivists deem reading comprehension as a complex process that refers to individual understanding and social interactive understanding.

Rowell and Palmer (2007) proposed cooperative learning strategies, e.g. jigsaw and semantic feature analysis, etc. based on a constructivist approach, including cognitive and social constructivism, to facilitate reading and writing. They state that the approach refers to interactive strategies and they largely emphasize the effectiveness of social interaction. By analyzing tests, questionnaires and interviews they found that the students' reading and writing improved by intervening in the college reading classes.

Edington (2007) created a balanced literacy program to engage students in dealing with reading models under the instruction of constructivist methodology which refers to “students research, organize information, write, reflect, discuss with their peers, present material to their classmates, and create authentic assessments” (p.1), etc. She provided a step-by-step direction to create a reading module according to constructivism. Finally, she found that those approaches to the guidance of the reading modules suit and benefit to her reading class.

Zhang (2008) set a strategy-based reading instruction program grounded on constructivist pedagogy, in which ESL students’ reading was promoted by using metacognitive strategies and sociocultural interactive learning. A research intervention to the classes including a control group and an experimental group came to a result that the students may be affected largely by the classroom environment because they can interact with others to discuss background of reading materials.

Phillips (2008) advocated learning in an environment with guided reading activities based on the view of constructivism. The guided reading includes a before-reading stage, a during-reading stage and an after-reading stage, which provide students opportunities for collaboration and construction of meaning and understanding of reading. In each stage, the researcher detailedly described how students and the teacher collaborate and construct understanding of a reading text. The researcher believes this guidance may have advantages to enhance students’ reading comprehension.

El-Koumy (2009) attempted to improve students' reading skills by using a performance assessment approach based on the theory of constructivism. A quasi-experimental study was employed by the researcher to test the effectiveness of this approach. Sixty-four first-year secondary school students in Egypt participated in this study. The pre-test and post-test scores data results showed that this study did not positively impact on improving students' reading skills.

Most of the empirical and theoretical research studies mentioned above show that constructivism has a positive impact on English reading. However, only the study by El-Koumy (2009) failed to improve students' reading. The reason for the failure may account for that this study did not provide a specific procedures for teaching reading. In the present study, the researcher offered social constructivist blog modules with specific procedures to teach reading. Furthermore, the positive studies mentioned above provide a great courage and confidence for the researcher to explore more meaningful learning environments for EFL readers. Therefore, the researcher believes the present study would achieve good results on improving students' reading comprehension.

2.2.2 BALL and EFL Reading Comprehension

In recent studies, many researchers have started to realize that a blog environment can facilitate writing and reading. The present study mainly involves a blog-based reading environment for teaching.

Ward (2004) in his study detailedly introduced the definition and history of blogs, and Ward also discussed how to use blogs to explore reading and writing. Ward

conducted a survey with first-year university students to collect data of their' utilization, beliefs and opinions of BALL. The researcher found that this group of students enjoys blog classes, and they also believe that BALL could improve their English learning. Therefore, blogs can boost students' high motivation and attitudes towards language learning of reading comprehension.

Pinkman (2005) brought BALL in the out-of-class learning to the university EFL students. She conducted a study by using questionnaires and interviews to get students' reflections and attitudes towards language learning. Her findings indicate that students' interests and motivation in English learning are raised because they can communicate with others, and that students' reading and writing skills are promoted by the use of BALL.

Ducate and Lomicka (2005) created a CALL environment of blogs for reading and writing. They conducted a longitudinal study on the uses of blogs to L2 reading and writing. After that, by collecting data from questionnaires and interviews, they found that students enjoyed studying on the blogosphere and their vocabulary and writing were promoted, but their reading was not promoted. The reason, as the researcher analyzed, may be that the blogs for students are not interesting and they ignore the comments from others.

Rashtchi and Hajihassani (2010) did a research study on a blog-based reading class. They divided 52 college students into a control group and an experimental group, and then they treated the experimental group with five weeks

blog-based instruction. They conducted pre-tests and post-tests, student questionnaires, and interviews to collect data. The findings from tests show that, compared with the control group, the experimental group of students' reading comprehension was not promoted by using blogs. However, from the questionnaires, students' attitudes towards reading were largely improved by using blogs. Students who were interviewed by the researchers think that a blog learning environment makes the class more friendly and their learning more interactive.

Bendriss (2012) conducted a two-term project of 16 books reading by asking the university students of similar reading levels to write their entries on their own blogs. The researcher collected data of students' feelings, ideas, reflections, or observations about the texts that they had read from their entries on blogs. He found that the students were motivated to read by writing entries on blogs; their experiences of social interaction were expanded; their awareness of linguistic skills were raised; their critical thinking were encouraged; and a forum for self-expression and learning communities was provided.

These studies indicate that blog-assisted reading classes could promote students' positive attitudes towards reading, and most studies listed above show that students believe their reading comprehension would be improved. However, as Rashtchi and Hajihassani's (2010) and Ducate and Lomicka's (2008) studies indicate, students' reading comprehension is not improved. The reasons may be the result of a lack of a guided teaching approach to instruction of the use of blogs, a shortage of

empirical teaching time, or an improper use of research methods. Therefore, the present study is hoped to find a positive result of reading for BALL.

2.2.3 Social Constructivist Approach and EFL Reading Comprehension

Although a social constructivist approach to the reading instruction was first proposed in a recent time, it boosts the development of the teaching of EFL reading comprehension. According to these studies below, this present study utilized the benefits and advantages of the social constructivist approach to reading classes.

Edington (2007) conducted a research study through reading instruction based on social constructivism. She asked students to create and present their own reading projects. In the research she used pre-tests and post-tests to examine students' promotion in reading comprehension. After three semesters' empirical teaching, she observed that students' reading were largely promoted by using this teaching approach. In this process the researcher found that the students used critical thinking skills to analyze reading texts. Moreover, students discussed their findings, presented their own projects to the class, and wrote reflection papers on their experience in a stirring learning environment.

Ramli et al. (2011) utilized an online system to teach reading via instruction of a social constructivist approach. They explained a reading process conducted by metacognitive strategies that are guided by social constructivism. They conducted a survey to obtain the findings for reading strategies. The result indicates that the learners need appropriate metacognitive strategies to help them read. Furthermore, a social constructivist approach in online reading suits those autonomous learners.

Attarzadeh (2011) instructed EFL learners' reading comprehension by a scaffolding approach based on social constructivism. He first divided the control group and the experimental group respectively into low, intermediate and high levels. Then he used pre-tests and post-tests to conduct this study with both groups. The experimental group is instructed by scaffolding. After finishing the experimentation and data collection, the researcher found that the experimental group with intermediate level was positively affected by the approach of scaffolding.

Reza and Mahmood (2013) developed a study on the scaffolding to teach reading. 126 university students participated in the research and they were divided into a control group and an experimental group with low and high levels of reading proficiency. The researchers used pre-tests and post-tests, and reading strategy questionnaires to collect data. After the experimentation, the researchers found that the low level students had more achievement than that of high level students in the experimental group. Furthermore, the learning from the instruction of scaffolding and reading strategies had more positive effects than single instruction of scaffolding.

One of the social constructivist approaches is collaborative learning. According to collaborative learning, researchers created a collaborative strategic reading (CSR) model to instruct reading teaching. Zoghi et al. (2010) conducted a research study with 42 freshmen. After 6 weeks' experimentation with the instruction of CSR, the researchers used pre-tests and post-tests, and interviews to collect data. They found that students' reading comprehension was not promoted. However,

students' attitudes towards reading were improved, and they enjoyed communicating in English with peers in collaborative environments.

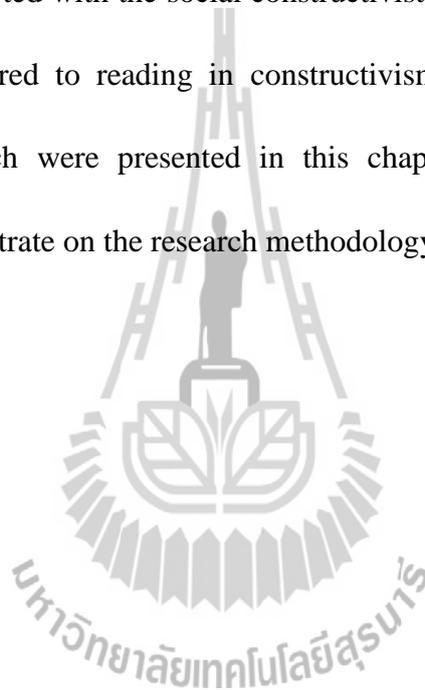
Novita (2012) also conducted a study emphasizing the use of the instruction of collaborative strategic reading (CSR) with 94 second semester non-English majors. She firstly divided these participants into a control group and an experimental group. Secondly, she used pre-tests to get the data of their pre-proficiency of reading comprehension to fall into low, intermediate and high level students. Thirdly, she carried out the teaching experimentation, and then collected the data from post-test and questionnaire. The result of the study indicated that CSR made an effective achievement on students' reading comprehension.

The research studies stated above provide a theoretical background of constructivism and a social constructivist approach for the present study, and some of their findings even offer meaningful implications to learning and teaching of EFL reading. In the present study, the researcher integrated the advantages of the social constructivist approach into a social constructivist instructional approach including scaffolding and collaborative learning. Combining with a blog-based environment, this study is hopeful to promote EFL learners' reading comprehension.

The next part will end with a brief summary of this chapter.

2.3 Summary

In this chapter, the theoretical background related to constructivism, reading comprehension and BALL were described. A research framework of a social constructivist approach to instructing reading was demonstrated in the theoretical background of this chapter. The researcher analyzed how a blog-based reading environment is connected with the social constructivist approach. Moreover, previous research studies referred to reading in constructivism, in BALL, and in a social constructivist approach were presented in this chapter. In the next chapter, the researcher will concentrate on the research methodology in the present study.



CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the procedures of the present study and discusses the principles of the research methodology. It consists of research design, participants, research instruments, procedures of the study, data collection, data analysis and a pilot study for the research study. Then, it ends with a summary of this chapter.

3.1 Research Design

According to the literature review in Chapter 2, in order to investigate the impacts of a blog-based EFL reading class grounded on social constructivist instructional approach (social constructivist BALL) on learners' reading comprehension and their attitudes towards reading, the present study refers to a quasi-experimental research (as mentioned in 3.4 on page 92) and a triangulated research methodology. Muller-Cajar and Mukundan (2007) state that the research methodology of triangulation includes investigator triangulation, theoretical triangulation, and methodological triangulation. This study utilizes theoretical triangulation and methodological triangulation. Theoretical triangulation was applied in the present study because this study involves interpretation and analysis of theories of constructivism, social constructivist approach, blog, and instructions of reading.

Methodological triangulation was employed in the present study for collecting data because it involves using two methods: quantitative methods (pre-experimental reading test and post-experimental reading test, and students' pre-experimental questionnaire and post-experimental questionnaire) and qualitative methods (students' blog interviews). There is a dialectical relationship between quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative interpretation with statistical data may enhance a qualitative description; inversely, a qualitative explanation could strengthen the quantitative evidence (Robson, 2002). The quantitative and qualitative methods were used to increase the validity of this study. Moreover, the utilization of the data triangulation was used to reach high reliability of the study.

This study was conducted within a 15-week course time-frame to collect data. Each week students need to learn one main reading text according to the textbook of the intensive reading course. Simultaneously, regarding each reading text, in the blog reading class (the experimental group) the teacher spent 1.5 hours on teaching it during the blog multi-media classroom reading teaching session, and after class, the teacher spent another 1.5 hours commenting on students' reading assignments (see Table 2.1, Table 2.2, and Table 2.3 from page 67 to 70). Comparatively, in the non-blog reading class (the control group), the teacher also spent 1.5 hours teaching each reading text during the non-blog multi-media classroom teaching session, and the teacher used 1.5 hours to correct students' assignments after class (see the similarities and differences between the blog reading class and the

non-blog reading class in Table 3.2 on page 83). To study the impacts of the social constructivist BALL on EFL reading classes, the researcher needs to examine the improvement of students' reading comprehension according to the data collected from students' pre-experimental and post-experimental reading test scores; this study needs to investigate the promotion of students' attitudes towards reading according to the data collected from students' pre-experimental and post-experimental questionnaires; and the researcher needs to explore how the social constructivist BALL can improve students' reading comprehension and their attitudes towards reading according to the data collected from students' opinions of students' blog interviews.

3.2 Participants of the Study

According to Punch (1998), all research studies involve sampling, which includes population and samples. A population in research means the total target group, that is, all students of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). A sample is the actual group who participates in the research, e.g. selected subjects from the whole EFL students. A sample can be the representative of the whole population (Punch, 1998). In the present study, the target population refers to all Chinese EFL learners; however, "it is impossible for a researcher to study the whole population" (Shen, 2011, p. 97). Thus, the sample of this study was selected from the first-year English majors who enrolled in an intensive reading course at Kaili University (KU) in September 2013. All English majors at KU have been studying the intensive reading course from

their freshman year to senior year. There are more than 200 students enrolled in English major at KU every year. On average, these students have at least 6 years English learning experiences.

In this study, the participants were undergraduate first-year English majors from two intact intensive reading classes. The reason that the researcher chose English majors as the main participants is that English major students have more time to study English than non-English majors. The reason that the researcher chose first-year English major students is that, at KU, first-year English majors have 6 hours a week to study an intensive reading course for their freshman year in each week, but those higher grade students only have 2 to 4 hours a week to study intensive reading according to the teaching syllabus at KU. Therefore, to freshmen, the teacher has sufficient time to make students to be familiar with studying reading on blogs. This present study used an intact class to carry out the experimentation and collect data. Creswell (2009) states, “in many experiments, only a convenient sample is possible because the investigator must use naturally formed groups such as a classroom, an organization or a family unit” (p. 155), and he also explains that the participants in a quasi-experimental study are not randomly assigned. Thus, according to the researcher, the use of the intact classes is more practical and authentic for students and teachers because in every real class, not only were some purposive selected students involved in, but also the intact groups of students were in the class; and it was more reliable and convenient for the teacher to conduct the research because in this group, the teacher treated the study as an ordinary class so that the students would not be bias.

The participants in this study were two intact classes of 110 first-year English majors. Based on the purposes of the present study, the intact class of students in an experimental classroom can naturally reflect the effects of the experiment (Hale & Astolfi, 2011). According to Slovin's sample size formula (Sevilla et al, 1997) (see Figure 3.1 below), the minimum sample size of the present study was 110 students. Therefore, the sample size of 110 students is appropriate for this study.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N \times e^2} *$$

$$n = \frac{150}{1 + 150 \times 0.05^2}$$

$$n \approx 110$$

*Note: n= a sample size
N= population size (is 150)
e= the desired margin of error
(usually is 0.05)

Figure 3.1 Slovin's Sample Size Formula (Sevilla et al., 1997) and Counted Process

These 110 students were divided into a control group (non-blog group) with 55 students and an experimental group (blog group) with other 55 students. In terms of the meaning of the control group, it is used to be compared by the experimental group, and a researcher needs to check whether there is any difference between both groups. If the result mirrors that there is a change, it means that the experiment has an effect on the experimental group. In this study, this sample size of 110 students consisted of these two groups for an independent variable.

3.3 Research Instruments

The instruments used in this study were pre-experimental reading test and post-experimental reading test, students' pre-experimental questionnaire and post-experimental questionnaire, and students' interview.

In order to address the first research question of the study, the scores from the reading pre-experimental reading tests and post-experimental reading tests were analyzed to answer the first research question. To respond to the second research question, the data of students' attitudes towards reading were collected from students' pre-experimental questionnaires and post-experimental questionnaires. In addition, data from students' interviews were analyzed and synthesized to answer the third research question (see Table 3.1 below).

Table 3.1 Summary of Research Questions and Research Instruments

Research Questions	Research Instruments
1) In what way does the social constructivist BALL have an impact on improving EFL students' reading comprehension?	Pre-experimental reading tests Post-experimental reading tests Students' interviews
2) How are students' attitudes towards reading promoted by the implementation of the social constructivist BALL?	Pre-experimental questionnaires Post-experimental questionnaires
3) What are the students' opinions on the social constructivist BALL reading class? How can the social constructivist BALL help with their EFL reading comprehension in the English reading class?	Students' interviews

3.3.1 Tests (Pre-Experimental Reading Test, Post-Experimental Reading Test)

The reading pre-experimental reading test and the reading post-experimental reading test were grounded on the national College English Test (CET) (see 1.2.1 on page 8). The reasons that the researcher adopted CET as the instrument of test are that, firstly, CET is a nationwide and the most popular English test for undergraduates on account of its importance of the qualification of their graduation and jobs; secondly, many research studies indicate that CET has a valid and reliable level of testing (Ma, 2012; Yang, 2006). There are three sections related to reading comprehension in CET band-4 (see Appendix I as the example). The first section is a Cloze Test aiming to test students' vocabulary and reading comprehension. Students are required to complete a passage by choosing 10 out of 15 words from the Word Bank to make the passage logical and comprehensible in 10 minutes. Section two is a Matching Test aiming to test students' understanding of a long passage of roughly 1,000 words. The long passage is made up of several paragraphs, and students are required to match 10 short statements that summarize each paragraph with their corresponding paragraphs of the long passage in 15 minutes. Section three is a Multiple-choice Test aiming to assess students' in-depth understanding of 2 passages followed by 5 questions or unfinished statements, respectively. Students have 15 minutes to complete this section.

3.3.2 Questionnaires (Pre-Experimental Questionnaire, Post-Experimental Questionnaire)

In this study, the questionnaire (see Appendix II) of the students' attitudes towards EFL reading aims to elicit the change between before experiment (use pre-experimental questionnaire) and after experiment (use post-experimental questionnaire). This questionnaire consists of two parts. The first part is students' personal information regarding their age, gender, and condition of using computers and so on. The second part is student's attitudes towards reading questionnaire, in which the researcher uses 29 items of questions and students can give their opinions by a five point scale (Likert Scales). This part of questionnaire was adapted from Rashtchi and Hajihassani's (2010) reading attitudes questionnaire, which was proved that it is valid (see Appendix IV and validity check in 3.3.4 on page 91), and it is reliable because its reliability Cronbach's alpha tested is 0.82 ($r = 0.82 > 0.7$). The reason that the researcher adapted this questionnaire as one of the instruments is its relevance to the present study because firstly, for a study of reading, learners' attitudes towards reading is an essential part on account of that teaching approaches and learning environment are not only involved in learners' level of reading comprehension, but also the affective elements do affect them; secondly, attitude plays a vital role in affective factors when a reader learns to read; at last, if the result of the tests is not satisfied, the researcher can use the attitude questionnaire to find out other factors why the teaching approaches and BALL do not work. Furthermore, the

questionnaire provided the instrument of interview more relevant questions. Therefore, this student's questionnaire supports the use in the present study.

3.3.3 Interviews

A semi-structured blog interview (see Appendix III) was conducted in this study. An interview is “a conversation initiated by the interviewer for specific purpose of obtaining research-relevant information and focused by him or her on content specified by research objectives of systematic description prediction or explanation” (Robson, 2002, p. 229). Interviews are categorized into unstructured, semi-structured and structured interview. A semi-structured interview is adopted to suit the objectives of the present study because, firstly, “it gives the interviewee a degree of power and control over the course of the interview; secondly, it gives the interviewer a great deal of flexibility; finally, and most profoundly, this form of interview gives one privileged access to other people's lives...” (Nunan, 1992, pp. 149-150).

A blog interview is an online interview. An online interview is a research instrument that is conducted with Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs), which refers to synchronous communication technologies, such as text messages, videoconferencing, and video calls and so on; and asynchronous communication technologies, e.g. e-mails, blogs, social networking sites and websites, etc. (Salmons, 2010). According to Salmons (2010), in an online interview, synchronous communication technologies require respondents' immediate reply; thus the participants lack adequate consideration; and vice versa, “slower responses may

indicate more powerful reflection on the deeper meanings of the inquiry” (Bampton & Cowton, 2002, as cited in Salmons, 2010, p. 7). Consequently, synchronous communication technologies provide participants with a deeper consideration in a sufficient time, e.g. several hours or days.

The reasons that the researcher adapted a blog interview are that, firstly, it saves costs in terms of that researcher and participants do not need to pay for the blogs. Secondly, participants can be interviewed in a more relaxed and egalitarian setting than that in a face-to-face environment. Thirdly, it is more convenient because the participants can respond to the interview questions in their free time, and also the researcher does not need to transcribe participants’ responses. Fourthly, it can naturally reflect participants’ opinions on account of that this research itself is a blog-based experimental study, and students are familiar with the use of a blog; at last, according to the purpose of this study, the researcher needs students’ deeper consideration of their opinions about the blog-based reading class. A blog is a convenient tool for online interview, so students may feel relax and have more time to respond to the interview questions.

The researcher adapted the interview questions from the questionnaire items (see Appendix II). After the researcher analyzed the data of students’ questionnaires from the pilot study, she found some questionnaire items quite relevant to the research purposes of this present study, and then she adapted these items into interview questions, which may answer the research questions for the present study.

These interview questions were testified valid (see Appendix IV and validity check in 3.3.4 below). Therefore, a semi-structured blog interview was conducted to collect qualitative data for the present study.

3.3.4 Content Validity Check for the Questionnaire and the Interview Questions

For the purpose of checking whether the questionnaire items and interview questions at the present study could measure what they were supposed to be designed for, the lists of questionnaire items and interview questions and evaluation forms were sent to two Chinese EFL teaching experts. One was a full professor who had more than 23 years' English teaching experience. The other was an associate professor who had more than 20 years' English teaching experience.

The Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) index is one of the validation methods for the relevancy of the content and the purposes of the instruments. The experts used IOC to check the validity of the questionnaire items and interview questions mentioned in the evaluation form, which used a 3-point scales (1 = relevant, 0 = uncertain, -1 = irrelevant). The calculated formula for IOC is:

$$IOC = \sum R / N$$

R: the total score from experts

N: the number of experts

Figure 3.2 IOC Formula

Then, the results of IOC index for each item of the questionnaire and interview questions were checked by item analysis (IAS). Appendix IV shows that the results of the items of the questionnaire and the interview questions calculated by IOC are 26.5 and 8.5 respectively. On the grounds of Booncherd (1974), the accredited value should be higher than or equal to 0.5 (≥ 0.5). The results of the questionnaire and the interview questions are 0.914 and 0.773 respectively (see Appendix IV). Therefore, the result of the IAS from the IOC indicated that there were 2 unacceptable items and 2 unacceptable questions in 29 items and 11 questions because they were irrelevant to the research purposes and research questions of the present study. Then, the researcher modified the unacceptable items of the questionnaire and the interview questions based on the 2 experts' suggestions. Finally these modified items were evaluated again and approved by the 2 experts. Consequently, the items of the questionnaire and the interview questions are valid.

3.4 Procedures of the Experimentation and Data Collection

This present study refers to a quasi-experimental research on EFL reading teaching via blog-assisted language learning (BALL) technology. Experimental research is “a study in which an intervention is deliberately introduced to observe its effect”, and a quasi-experimental research is “an experiment in which units are not assigned to conditions randomly” (Shadish et al., 2001, p. 12). By a quasi-experimental research, this study might elicit an effect of the utilization of the social constructivist BALL to reading class and answered the research questions.

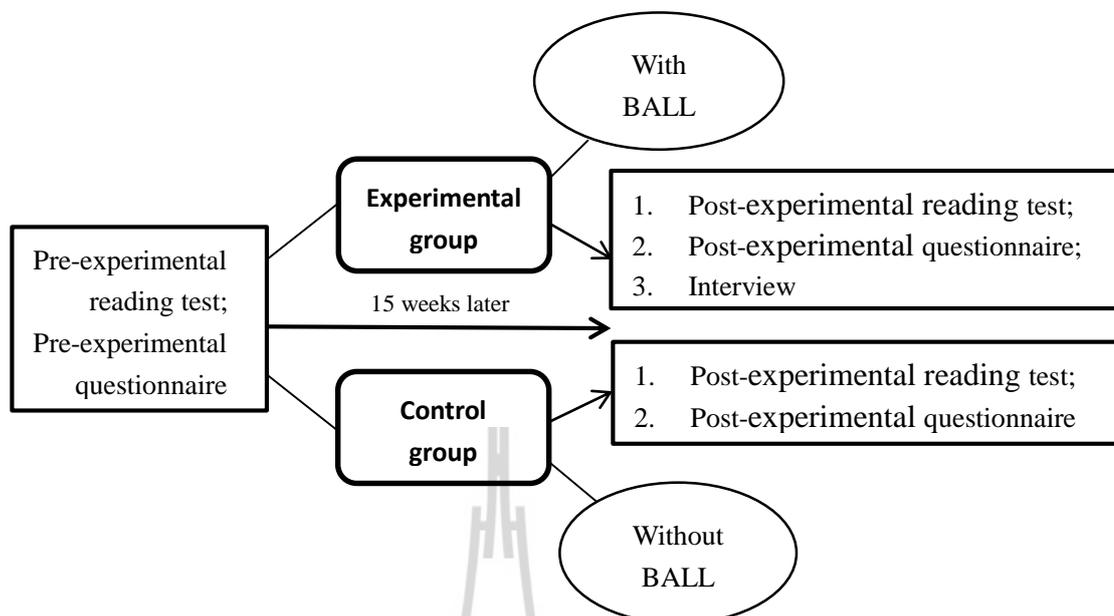


Figure 3.3 An Overview of Procedures of the Experimentation and Data Collection

Figure 3.3 above is an overall picture of the procedures of the experiment and also of data collection. As mentioned in 3.3 (on page 86), 110 EFL students were divided into an experimental group and a control group. Before carrying out the teaching experiment, the researcher firstly collected data from students' pre-experimental reading tests and pre-experimental questionnaires. Secondly, both experimental group and control group were involved in empirical teaching. Lastly, after 15 weeks learning of reading, data from post-experimental reading test, post-experimental questionnaire and a semi-structured blog interview were collected by the researcher.

3.4.1 Procedures of the Experimentation

For both experimental group and control group, they were involved in the same reading content. The teaching content of reading was based on the teaching material that is *Integrated Skills of English* (Zou, 2010) textbook, which was a newest and most popular version for English majors. In this study, all the 110 freshmen level participants learnt this textbook with 15 units in 15 weeks. Both the control group and the experimental group had an equal gender ratio that all were intervened by the social constructivist instructional approach. In particular, for the experimental group, BALL was used in the reading class with the social constructivist instructional approach. The experimentation was conducted from February to June in 2014.

Below is a table for describing the experimentation of empirical teaching with the control group and the experimental group.



Table 3.2 Similarities and Differences of the Experimentation of Empirical Teaching with the Control Group and the Experimental Group

	Element	Control group (Non-blog reading class)	Experimental group (Blog reading class)
<u>Similarities</u>	Instruction time	3 hours/text/week (see table 2.1) total 15 weeks	3 hours/text/week (see table 2.1) total 15 weeks
	Teaching material	Integrated Skills of English (Zou, 2010) total 15 units	Integrated Skills of English (Zou, 2010) total 15 units
	Proficiency level of English	freshmen level	freshmen level
	Genders	45 females & 10 males	45 females & 10 males
<u>Differences</u>	Instruction approach	communicative language teaching approach	social constructivist instructional approach
	Learning environment	non-blog multi-media classroom	blog multi-media classroom with the use of blog modules (see Table 2.1)

The experimental group who was involved in blog-based reading class studied at the multi-media classroom through the use of blogs. In order to make the students get familiar with the use of blog, the researcher made learners practice accessing the teacher's blog and applying their own blogs in the first two weeks learning. The researcher posted some relevant teaching content of the textbook on her own blog. Not only were reading texts and exercises included, but also some meaningful and authentic pictures and videos were added in the teacher's blog (see Appendix V as an example); thus, students' schema could be expanded by scaffolding

in this process. Students were required to accomplish some tasks by collaborating, such as reading reflection papers, story retellings, sharing ideas and comments, and so on, via posting on their own blogs (see Appendix V as an example). These students and the teacher could interact with each other by writing on their own diary boards and commenting on others' message boards. This empirical teaching was conducted in 15 weeks during students' pre-experimental reading tests and post-experimental reading tests, and it ended up with a final exam.

3.4.2 Procedures of the Pre-Experimental Reading Test and Post-Experimental Reading Test

At the beginning of the new semester, in February 2014, students in both experimental group and control group were assessed by a pre-experimental reading test, which was derived from the reading part of a real test of CET band-4. This part of reading test took students 45 minutes to complete. The full score is 100 points. After 15 weeks experimentation, in May 2014, these same participants were assessed by a post-experimental reading test which was derived from the reading part from another real test of CET band-4. The full score was 100 points as well. All the tests were paper-pencil form of assessment.

3.4.3 Procedures of the Pre-Experimental Questionnaire and Post-Experimental Questionnaire

At the beginning of the new semester, in February 2014, both experimental group and control group of students were required to answer a pre-experimental

questionnaire. After 15 weeks empirical teaching, these same participants were required to answer a post-experimental questionnaire. All the questionnaires were paper-pencil tests.

3.4.4 Procedures of the Semi-Structured Blog Interview

In this study, the semi-structured blog interview was only conducted with the experimental group of 55 participants. At first, the researcher posted interview questions on her own blog in week 15 of the experimentation. Later, students were asked to answer these interview questions via commenting on the teacher's blog during week 15 and week 16. The answers and opinions from these students were kept in the teacher's blog permanently.

3.5 Data Analysis

The present study is to investigate the impact of the social constructivist BALL on students' reading comprehension and attitudes towards reading. According to the research design for this study, the researcher needs to: firstly, examine whether students' reading comprehension was improved via the utilization of the social constructivist BALL (analyzing data from pre-experimental and post-experimental reading tests scores); secondly, investigate whether students' attitudes towards reading were promoted by learning in the social constructivist BALL environment (analyzing data from pre-experimental and post-experimental questionnaires); lastly, explore students' opinions on the social constructivist BALL class in order to

understand in what ways their reading comprehension and attitudes towards reading were improved (analyzing data from student blog interviews). This section presents the procedures of data analyses including pre-experimental and post-experimental reading tests, pre-experimental and post-experimental questionnaires, and student blog interviews.

3.5.1 Data from the Pre-Experimental Reading Test and Post-Experimental Reading Test

After collecting the data of scores from experimental group and control group of students' pre-experimental reading tests and post-experimental reading tests, and putting all the data into a computer program called Statistical Package in Social Science (SPSS), the researcher analyzed the two sets of data in 3 steps.

In order to secure impartiality and avoid bias of the research, the researcher dealt with the data from pre-experimental reading tests of both groups firstly to know whether there was a large difference between the experimental group and the control group. If the statistical data showed that the experimental group's mean score analyzed by *Descriptive Analysis* and the significant difference number analyzed by *Paired Samples T Test* were not significantly different from the control group, the research was lack of partiality and bias; thus the research could be continued as arranged. If the calculated data show a significant difference between the experimental group and the control group, both former groups should be reorganized into two new groups by students' pre-experimental reading test scores.

In the second step, the researcher managed the data from post-experimental reading tests of both groups. The data analysis method was the same as the first step that was to compare the mean scores and calculate the significant difference point by using *Descriptive Analysis* and *Paired Samples T Test* respectively. If the results present that there was a significant difference between the experimental group and the control group, it meant that the experimentation had an effect on the experimental group. Furthermore, if the mean scores showed that the score of the experimental group was much higher than that of the control group, the empirical teaching methods with computer technology had an effective impact on the EFL reading learners' reading comprehension.

Last but not least, the data of scores of both pre-experimental reading tests and post-experimental reading tests from both groups were respectively calculated by *Descriptive Analysis* and *Paired Samples T Test* as well. The overall mean scores and significant difference points were summarized into Table 4.1.5 (on page 117) of Chapter 4 to help answer Research Question 1.

3.5.2 Data from the Pre-Experimental Questionnaire and Post-Experimental Questionnaire

In order to know students' attitudes towards EFL reading class, an attitudes questionnaire was conducted in the present study. As discussed earlier, the same questionnaire was answered twice, which was administrated by the pre-experimental questionnaire and the post-experimental questionnaire. To analyze the data from the

pre-experimental questionnaire and the post-experimental questionnaire via SPSS program, there were 3 main stages for the researcher to handle.

At the first stage, before the experimentation, the researcher collected the data from the pre-experimental questionnaire, and then used *Independent t-test* and *Frequency Analysis* based on *Descriptive Analysis* respectively to understand whether there was a significant difference of students' attitudes between the experimental group and the control group, and to know their specific attitudes from each item on the questionnaire. To avoid the bias, if there were no significant difference between both groups, the next steps could be continued.

Secondly, after the experimentation, the researcher collected the data from the post-experimental questionnaire, and then analyzed the data also by using *Independent t-test* and *Frequency Analysis* respectively to know whether there was a significant difference of students' attitudes between the experimental group and the control group, and to understand their specific attitudes from each item on the questionnaire.

Last but not least, to understand whether the blog-based group students' attitudes towards reading were positively promoted, the researcher employed *Independent t-test* to expose whether there was any significant difference of the experimental group students' attitudes between the pre-experimental questionnaire and the post-experimental questionnaire. Then, the researcher applied *Frequency Analysis* to find out the experimental group students' altered attitudes towards EFL

reading by comparing the data of the pre-experimental questionnaire to the data of the post-experimental questionnaire.

The overall frequency percentages and *p*-values were summarized into tables in section 4.2 of Chapter 4, which could answer Research Question 2.

3.5.3 Data from the Semi-Structured Blog Interview

The semi-structured blog interview was used to collect the qualitative data for the research study. By analyzing the data from this instrument, the researcher employed the qualitative method of data analysis firstly to copy the whole students' answers and responses from the teacher's blog interview page; secondly, to code information related to the research questions; thirdly, to categorize students opinions into different points of view according to the research questions; lastly, to summarize and synthesize students' comments and opinions on the utilization of a social constructivist BALL to their reading class by using the researcher's own words. The finally summarized opinions could reveal the in-depth reasons for helping answer Research Question 1 and Research Question 3.

3.6 The Pilot Study

A pilot study, also called a pilot experiment, is a small study that is to test logistics and gather information before conducting a main experiment (Thabane et al., 2010). A pilot study can not only promote the main experiment's quality and efficiency, but also reveal difficulties in the design of the methods and procedures of

the study. Therefore, in the present study, a pilot experiment had been conducted prior to the main experiment.

3.6.1 Participants

There were 20 first-year undergraduates from Kaili University participating in this pilot study. They were selected according to convenience and availability. All of them are English majors. There were 8 male and 12 female students. Five of them (2 male, 3 female) participated in the interviews. These participants of the pilot study will also continue to take part in the main study. The 20 participants were divided into a non-blog control group (4 males and 6 females) and a blog-based experimental group (4 males and 6 females).

3.6.2 Research Instruments

According to 3.3, the research instruments include tests, questionnaires and blog interviews in the pilot study. The tests elicited impacts of the implementation of the social constructivist BALL on students' reading comprehension. The questionnaires and interviews were used to obtain students' attitudes and opinions towards the BALL reading class.

3.6.3 Experimentation and Data Collection

The pilot study started from September to October, 2013. The experiment and data collection lasted for 4 weeks. The procedures (as mentioned in 3.4) of the experimentation and data collection on tests, questionnaires and interviews are as follows:

Firstly, before doing empirical teaching, the researcher collected data from 20 students' pre-experimental reading tests and pre-experimental questionnaires. Then, she prepared teaching materials on the blog for the experimentation.

Secondly, the researcher spent 4 weeks on carrying out the empirical teaching. Ten students participated in the blog-based reading class experiment.

At last, after the teaching experimentation was almost finished, the researcher collected data of post-experimental reading tests, post-experimental questionnaires and blog interviews from participants.

In short, the procedures of experimentation and data collection were nearly based on the present paper mentioned in 3.4.

3.6.4 Data Analysis

The procedures of data analysis were on the basis of the paper as mentioned in 3.5. The data gained from students' tests, questionnaires, and blog interviews were concluded to the results as follows.

3.6.5 Results

3.6.5.1 Tests

Both pre-experimental reading test and post-experimental reading test were selected from real CET-4 tests, which were validated and attested by China's National College English Testing Committee (see 1.2.1 on page 8); thus, the present tests are reliable and valid, and it could be used in the main study.

The pre-experimental reading tests analyzed by SPSS 19.0 showed that there was no significant difference between the control group and the

experimental group indicating that there was no bias and these participants could continue to participate in this study. After the four-week experiment, the researcher collected data of scores from post-experimental reading tests of the control group and the experimental group. By the analysis of *Paired Samples T Test* in SPSS 19.0, the data of the control group and the experimental group were respectively calculated from students' pre-experimental reading test and post-experimental reading test scores. As shown in Table 3.3, there were significant differences in pre-experimental reading tests and post-experimental reading tests between the control group and the experimental group respectively ($p_1 = 0.023 < 0.05$; $p_2 = 0.048 < 0.05$). According to tests' scores and mean scores (see Pair 1 and Pair 2 in Table 3.3 below), it indicates that both groups' reading comprehension was promoted by 4 weeks teaching. However, data from the post-experimental reading tests between the control group and the experimental group showed that they had no significant difference ($p_3 = 0.233 > 0.05$). Thus, it indicated that students' reading comprehension had no significant promotion after the empirical teaching (see Pair 3 in Table 3.3 below). The reasons might be firstly attributed to students' limited exposure time to the reading comprehension so that their schema accumulated is far from enough to reach the qualified level of College English Test (CET); Secondly, students have not adapted very well to the blog learning environment, even to the English major's study because they are college new comers; lastly, the problems of the Internet connections and facilities availability also largely influence the researcher's teaching and students' learning. Therefore, these problems should be solved before the researcher conducts the main study.

Table 3.3 Mean Scores and Significant Differences from Pre-Experimental Reading Tests and Post-Experimental Reading Tests between Control Group and Experimental Group

		N	Mean	SD	Sig.
Pair 1	Pre-test-1. Control group	10	32.00	0.823	0.023
	Post-test-1. Control group	10	35.70	1.287	
Pair 2	Pre-test-2. Experimental group	10	33.00	0.699	0.048
	Post-test-2. Experimental group	10	37.40	1.247	
Pair 3	Post-test-1. Control group	10	35.70	1.287	0.233
	Post-test-2. Experimental group	10	37.40	1.247	

3.6.5.2 Questionnaires

“The two most important and fundamental characteristics of any measurement procedure are reliability and validity” (Miller, 2008, p.1). Thus, the reliability and validity of the instruments had been tested in the pilot study. According to Devellis (2012), a standardized reliability of tests or questionnaires could be accepted if the alpha (α) is at least equal to 0.7 ($\alpha \geq 0.7$).

After inputting data derived from students’ pre-experimental questionnaires and post-experimental questionnaires scores and calculating by SPSS 19.0, the reliability value was found to be 0.738 ($\alpha = 0.738$), which was higher than 0.7. Moreover, the validity tested by the researcher was valid (see Appendix IV). Therefore, the present questionnaire was reliable and valid, and it could be used in the main study.

The pre-experimental questionnaires for the control group and the experimental group were calculated by SPSS 19.0 showing that there was no significant difference between both groups. It indicated that there was no bias and these participants could continue to take part in this study.

After four weeks' experiment, the researcher collected data from post-experimental questionnaires of the control group and the experimental group. Table 3.4 below showed that students' attitudes towards reading were promoted according to the data of the mean score and the *p* value. And it also indicated that students' attitudes towards reading were promoted according to the data by comparing items between pre-experimental questionnaires and post-experimental questionnaires.

Table 3.4 Mean Scores, Standard Deviation and Significant Difference of Questionnaires of Students' Attitudes towards Reading

	N	Mean	SD	Sig.
Pre-experimental questionnaires	20	51.85	11.173	0.524
Post-experimental questionnaires	20	52.25	9.462	

Table 3.5 presented below referred to the content of the questionnaire's items, and it elicited students' positive change of views towards reading. After computing the significant differences between pre-experimental questionnaires and post-experimental questionnaires by using SPSS, the researcher found a positive change (a significant difference) item of the questionnaire and then put them in Table 3.5 below. The *p* value ($p=0.025<0.05$) shows that there is a

significant difference between pre-experimental questionnaires and the post-experimental questionnaires on the Item 5. Moreover, the statistical analysis of the mean scores implies that the experimental group students' attitude on this point was promoted to be positive, so it indicated that after the experimentation, more students realized that reading is important and worthy of spending time on it.

Table 3.5 Comparison of Mean Scores and Significant Difference of Items of Pre-Experimental Questionnaires and Post-experimental Questionnaires

	N	Mean	Sig.
5. Reading in English is a waste of time.	20	Pre 1.40	0.025
		Post 1.00	

3.6.5.3 Interviews

The results from the blog interview with the five interviewees revealed that more than half of them had positive opinions towards the implementation of the social constructivist BALL (1) they all considered that reading was a very important skill for them to expand their vocabulary, to learn grammar, to know more about culture background, and to enhance writing and listening skills; 2) most of them felt that a blog reading class was interesting but they have not been used to reading on blogs; 3) all of them believed that pictures, videos and other people's comments as blog tools could help them understand a reading text better through sharing ideas and comments on blogs because they thought they could learn from each other, and they considered that writing reflection papers on blogs could make them understand target reading texts better and train their writing skills as well.

3.6.6 Implications for the Main Study

In order to make the present study more valid and reliable, the pilot study provided an overall process and offered the researcher useful implications for the main study.

The results from the pilot study suggested some implications for the present study as follows:

Firstly, the empirical teaching experimentation needed more careful treatment. In the pilot study, students who were involved in the blog reading class did not focus on the researcher's instructions to use blogs and assignments, leading them to be inattentive in learning. Therefore, when the researcher was carrying out the main experimentation, she should make the blog teaching content interesting and give them more chances to accumulate schema. Moreover, the researcher needed to make sure that every student could access to blogs, and tried to make students adapt to the using of blogs for learning EFL reading.

Secondly, the pre-experimental reading test and post-experimental reading test content used in the main study should avoid the situation that some students might have been tested before. According to the tests' results of the pilot study, compared with the control group, students from the experimental group had no significant superiority. Thus, the researcher needed to select the real CET tests from each year carefully.

Lastly, the interview questions should be adapted because they needed constant questions for each item of questions; otherwise students answered those questions perfunctorily.

In the main study, the researcher made the blog learning environment interesting and attractive, so students followed the teacher's instruction and did activities on blogs actively and interactively in this atmosphere. Students did not only access to blogs skillfully, but also could create their own blogs vividly. As for the reading tests content, the researcher selected each item of reading part in the real CET-4 tests from different years, thus the study avoided bias on the tests content. Moreover, the interview questions were adapted by adding some "why" and "what" questions attached at the end of each question. To sum up, the implications from the pilot study help the researcher improve the implementation of the main study.

3.7 Summary

In conclusion, this chapter introduced the research methodology employed in the present study. The research instruments of reading tests, students' attitudes questionnaire, and a semi-structured blog interview were used to investigate the effects of teaching approach of social constructivism via blog-based instruction on the EFL reading class, and the ideas for implementing blogs. The procedures of the experimentation and data collection were described. The data analyses of the tests, questionnaires, and the interview were involved in quantitative and qualitative research methods. It ended with a pilot study and a summary of this chapter. In the next chapter, results of this research study will be discussed.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH RESULTS

This chapter reports the results of data analysis of the main study. According to the research purposes and research questions of the present study, both quantitative and qualitative data analyses were employed in analyzing the data from pre-experimental reading test, post-experimental reading test, pre-experimental questionnaire and post-experimental questionnaire and students' blog interview. Results of this study were revealed by using the analyzed data. At last, it ends with a summary of this chapter.

4.1 Results of Reading Tests

This section reports the results of students' pre-experimental reading tests, post-experimental reading tests, and the comparisons between both the pre-experimental reading tests and the post-experimental reading tests. Then, the researcher uses the present analyzed data to help answer Research Question 1 firstly to examine whether the social constructivist BALL has any impact on EFL students' reading comprehension.

4.1.1 Results of Pre-Experimental Reading Test

The pre-experimental reading test was a students' reading comprehension test applied before the researcher conducted the main study. The purposes of

employing the results from the pre-experimental reading test are: 1) to be used as a reference standard to compare with the post-experimental reading test results so that the researcher might understand whether the social constructivist BALL can improve students' reading comprehension (to help answer Research Question 1); and 2) to be used as a part of the criteria to judge whether the two intact classes including a control group (non-blog class) and an experimental group (blog class) had equal reading comprehension proficiency levels before conducting the main study so that it could avoid bias in the main study.

The content of the pre-experimental reading test was adopted from College English Test (CET) Band-4 in China's national test (see 1.2.1 on page 8). All the 110 participants, first year English major students at Kaili University, were assessed by the pre-experimental reading test at the beginning of their second semester in February, 2014.

As mentioned in 3.5.1 (on page 98), the data from the pre-experimental reading test were analyzed by *Descriptive Analysis* and *Paired Sample T Test* on the SPSS computer program. Firstly, after the researcher put students' scores of both control group and experimental group in the database of the SPSS program, she used *Descriptive Analysis* to get the mean scores of the pretest from the control group and the experimental group. Then, the researcher employed *Paired Sample T Test* to test whether there was significant difference between both groups in terms of their reading comprehension proficiency levels.

Table 4.1.1 below shows the mean scores ($m_1=32.29$; $m_2=31.84$) from students' pre-experimental reading test between the experimental group and the control group. Although the mean score of the experimental group is higher than that of the control group, there is no significant difference between them. If the p value is lower than 0.05 ($p<0.05$), it means that there is a significant difference between both groups. As calculated by the *Paired Sample T Test*, the p value ($p=0.821>0.05$) indicates that there was no significant difference between both groups regarding the mean scores in the pre-experimental reading test. That is to say, the researcher could conduct the main study with both intact classes with no bias.

Table 4.1.1 Mean Scores and Significant Difference from Pre-Experimental Reading Test between the Experimental Group and the Control Group

		N	Mean	SD	Sig.
Pre-Experimental Reading Test	Pre-test-1. Experimental group	55	32.29	10.322	0.821
	Pre-test-2. Control group	55	31.84	11.524	

According to China's National College English Testing Committee, CET has four English proficiency levels including unsatisfactory (level 1: 0-39% points), basic (level 2: 40%-59% points), mastery (level 3: 60%-79% points) and advanced (level 4: 80%-100% points). After the researcher put the scores in the database of the SPSS program, she merged the data of students' reading scores into different levels according to the four English proficiency levels stated above. The mean scores ($m_i=1.29$; $m_{ii}=1.31$) from the experimental group and the control group in Table

4.1.2 below represent that both groups of students' average English reading proficiency level were in between level 1 and level 2. It indicates that students' reading comprehension was in a low and unsatisfactory level. Therefore, students' reading comprehension needs to be improved. The *p value* ($p= 0.830 > 0.05$) below also indicates that there was no significant difference between the scores of both groups in the pre-experimental reading test. Thus, the participants in the present control group and the experimental group could take part in the social constructivist BALL class of the present study.

Table 4.1.2 English Proficiency Levels between the Experimental Group and the Control Group through Pre-Experimental Reading Test

Pre-Experimental Reading Tests		N	Mean	SD	Sig.
English Reading Proficiency Levels	i . Experimental group	55	1.29	0.458	0.830
	ii . Control group	55	1.31	0.505	

After obtaining the results from students' pre-experimental reading test, the researcher spent 15 weeks on conducting the experiment and then gained the data from students' post-experimental reading test of both groups.

The next section reports the results from students' post-experimental reading tests.

4.1.2 Results of Post-Experimental Reading Test

The post-experimental reading test was a students' reading comprehension test applied after the researcher conducted the main study. The purposes of employing

the results from the post-experimental reading test are: 1) to use as variables to compare with the pre-experimental reading test results so that it might help the researcher understand whether the social constructivist BALL class can improve students' reading comprehension (to help answer Research Question 1); and 2) to be used as a part of the comparison values to testify whether the experimental group (blog class) had any higher reading comprehension proficiency level than the control group (non-blog class) after conducting the main study.

The content of the post-experimental reading test was adopted from College English Test (CET) Band-4 in China's national test (see 1.2.1 on page 7). All the 110 participants, first year English major students at Kaili University, were assessed by the post-experimental reading test at the end of their second semester in June, 2014.

As mentioned in 3.5.1, the data from the post-experimental reading test were analyzed by *Descriptive Analysis* and *Paired Sample T Test* on the SPSS computer program. Firstly, after the researcher put students' scores of both control group and experimental group in the program, she used *Descriptive Analysis* to get the mean scores of the pretests from the control group and the experimental group. Then, the researcher employed *Paired Sample T Test* to test whether there was a significant difference between both groups in terms of their reading comprehension proficiency levels.

In the Table 4.1.3 below, the mean scores ($m_1=52.40$; $m_2=40.38$) from students' post-experimental reading test between the experimental group and the

control group are given. The mean score of the experimental group is higher than that of the control group. As calculated by the *Paired Sample T Test*, the *p* value ($p=0.00<0.05$) indicates that there is a significant difference between the scores of both groups in the post-experimental reading test. Integrating the *p* value to the mean score, the results indicate that the blog-based experimental group's reading proficiency level is higher than the non-blog control group after the 15-week experiment. In this study, social constructivist BALL reading modules for teaching a reading text were intervened in the experimental group class; however, the control group studied reading in a traditional non-blog learning environment. Therefore, the researcher infers that the social constructivist BALL class positively impacted on the students' reading comprehension so that their test mean score is higher than the traditional class's.

Table 4.1.3 Mean Scores and Significant Difference from Post-Experimental Reading Test between the Experimental Group and the Control Group

		N	Mean	SD	Sig.
Post-Experimental Reading Test	Post-test-1. Experimental group	55	52.40	10.304	0.000
	Post-test-2. Control group	55	40.38	13.569	

According to the four English proficiency levels in CET (see 4.1.1), the mean scores ($m_i=2.18$; $m_{ii}=1.62$) from the control group and the experimental group in Table 4.1.4 below represent that the control group students' average English reading proficiency levels were in between level 1 and level 2, and that the

experimental group students' average English reading proficiency levels were in between level 2 and level 3. It indicates that non-blog group students' reading comprehension is still in a low and unsatisfactory level, while the blog-based group students' reading comprehension has been promoted to a higher level, that is, a basic reading proficiency level. Furthermore, the *p value* ($p= 0.000<0.05$) below also indicates that there was a significant difference between the scores of both groups in the post-experimental reading test. At the beginning of the experiment, both groups' reading proficiency level was the same and had no significant difference. The blog-based reading modules grounded on a social constructivist instructional approach was implemented in the experimental group class; but for the control group, students learned reading in a traditional reading class. After the experiment, both groups' proficiency level had significant difference, and the experimental group's was higher than the non-blog group's. Thus, the researcher can infer that the students from blog-based class were positively impacted through 15-week experiment by utilizing the social constructivist instructional approach.

Table 4.1.4 English Proficiency Levels between the Experimental Group and the Control Group through Post-Experimental Reading Tests

Post-Experimental Reading Tests		N	Mean	SD	Sig.
English Reading Proficiency Levels	i . Experimental group	55	2.18	0.580	0.000
	ii . Control group	55	1.62	0.593	

4.1.3 Answers to Research Question 1

The first purpose of the present study is to find out how the social constructivist BALL can impact on improving EFL students' reading comprehension. Accordingly, the Research Question 1 is: *In what way does the social constructivist BALL have an impact on improving EFL students' reading comprehension?* The researcher firstly needs to examine whether the social constructivist BALL have any positive impact on EFL students' reading comprehension. Thus, in this section, in order to answer Research Question 1, the researcher summarized the data analyzed above into Table 4.1.5 and Figure 4.1 below to help answer this research question.

Table 4.1.5 Data of Mean Scores, English Proficiency Levels and Significant Differences

		N	Mean.t (test score)	Mean.p (proficiency level)	Sig.
Pair 1	Pre-test. Control group	55	31.84	1.31	0.003
	Post-test. Control group	55	40.38	1.62	
Pair 2	Pre-test. Experimental group	55	32.29	1.29	0.000
	Post-test. Experimental group	55	52.40	2.18	
Pair 3	Post-test. Control group	55	40.38	1.62	0.000
	Post-test. Experimental group	55	52.04	2.18	

The data from the pre-experimental reading test and post-experimental reading test in Pair 1 are the control group's mean scores of test scores, mean scores of English proficiency levels and p values of significant differences. The data from the pre-experimental reading test and post-experimental reading test in Pair 2 are the

experimental group's data. It is necessary to know the comparative data of the control group because it can be used to compare the progress with the experimental group. In Pair 1, the p value is less than 0.05 ($p_1=0.003<0.05$), which means that the non-blog class students made progress after 15-week experiment. In Pair 2, the p value is less than 0.05 ($p_2=0.000<0.05$), which means that the blog-based class students also made progress after 15-week empirical teaching. The both groups' reading comprehension was improved by the experiment of the present study. Nevertheless, comparing the mean scores of the tests scores and proficiency levels ($M.p_1=1.31, 1.62$; $M.p_2= 1.29, 2.18$) with those of the non-blog group, the blog-based group made greater progress than the non-blog group.

The data from the post-experimental reading test in Pair 3 are the control group and the experimental group's mean scores of test scores, mean scores of English proficiency levels and p values of significant differences. In Pair 3, the p value is less than 0.05 ($p_3=0.000<0.05$), which means that there is a significant difference between the control group and the experimental group in the post-experimental reading test. According to the both groups' mean scores of their proficiency levels ($M.p_3=1.62, 2.18$), most students from the blog-based group reached level 2 (basic reading proficiency level), but students' reading comprehension proficiency level from the non-blog group was still in between level 1 and level 2 (unsatisfactory reading proficiency level). Thus, the experimental group students made greater progress than the control group students after 15-week empirical

teaching.

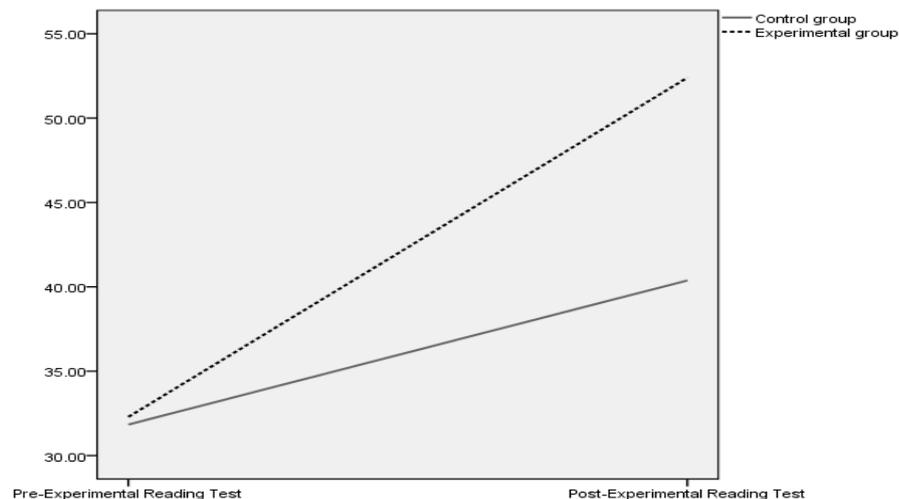


Figure 4.1 Comparisons between the Both Groups' Tests Scores in the Pre-experimental Reading Test and the Post-Experimental Reading Test

Figure 4.1 above demonstrates the comparisons between both groups' tests scores in the pre-experimental reading test and the post-experimental reading test. The figure above also indicates that the social constructivist BALL has a positive effect on improving EFL students' reading comprehension. After 15-week experiment via utilizing the blog-based modules by the social constructivist instructional approach, the students' reading comprehension was effectively improved compared to that of the non-blog class.

According to the analysis above, the first answer to the Research Question 1 is that the social constructivist BALL has a positive impact on improving EFL students' reading comprehension. As for the ways of the social constructivist BALL

which facilitated students reading comprehension, the data analyzed from student blog interviews in section 4.3 will help answer Research Question 1.

The next section is the data analysis of attitudes questionnaires for answering Research Question 2.

4.2 Results of Students' Attitudes Questionnaires

This section reports the results of students' reading pre-experimental questionnaires, post-experimental questionnaires, and the comparison results between the pre-experimental questionnaires and the post-experimental questionnaires. Then the researcher uses the present analyzed data to reveal the answer to Research Question 2 according to the second research purpose that is to investigate how students' attitudes towards reading are promoted through the utilization of the social constructivist BALL. The researcher needs to firstly understand whether students' attitudes towards reading are promoted through the utilization of the social constructivist BALL, and then to find out their altered attitudes towards reading.

4.2.1 Results of Students' Pre-Experimental Questionnaire

The pre-experimental questionnaire in the present study is a questionnaire employed before the researcher carried out the teaching experiment. The aim of using the questionnaire is to test students' attitudes towards reading. This questionnaire was adapted from Rashtchi and Hajihassani's (2010) reading attitudes questionnaire (see

Appendix II). The researcher translated the questionnaire into Chinese (see Appendix II Chinese Version) and then asked the participants to answer the written questionnaire in Chinese. According to Devellis (2012), the *reliability value* (α) should be at least equal to 0.70 ($\alpha \geq 0.70$) (see 3.6.5.2 on page 105). After putting the data derived from students' pre-experimental questionnaires scores into SPSS 19.0 program, the *reliability value* was found to be 0.799 ($\alpha = 0.799 > 0.7$), which was higher than 0.7. It means that the items in students' attitudes questionnaires were reliable. Furthermore, the validity of the questionnaire tested by the researcher was valid (see Appendix IV). Therefore, the present questionnaire was reliable and valid, and it could be used as the post-experimental questionnaire after the experiment.

This questionnaire needs students to answer before the experiment and after the experiment so that the researcher could know whether the experiment had impacts on students' attitudes towards reading. Therefore, it is necessary to obtain the data from the pre-experimental questionnaires (used before the experiment) as well as the post-experimental questionnaires (used after the experiment). The purposes of getting the data from the pre-experimental questionnaires were: 1) to be used as a reference standard to be compared with the data from students' post-experimental questionnaires so that the researcher might find the answer to whether the social constructivist BALL class could help students improve their attitudes towards reading (to help answer Research Question 2); and 2) to be used as a part of the criteria to identify that the two intact classes including an experimental group (blog class) and a

control group (non-blog class) had similar attitudes towards reading before conducting the main study so that it could avoid bias in the present study.

All the 110 participants, first year English major students at Kaili University, were required to respond to the pre-experimental questionnaires at the beginning of the freshmen English majors' second semester in February, 2014.

As discussed in 3.5.2, the data from the pre-experimental questionnaires were analyzed by *Frequency Analysis* based on *Descriptive Analysis*, and *Independent t-test* on the SPSS computer program. Firstly, after the researcher put students' questionnaires scores in the program with 5-point Likert-scale: (1 point) *Strongly disagree*; (2 point) *Disagree*; (3 point) *Not sure*; (4 point) *Agree*; and (5 point) *Strongly agree*, the researcher merged the 5-point Likert-scale data into 3-point Likert-scale including (1 point) *Disagree*; (2 point) *Not sure*; (3 point) *Agree* in order to make the difference distinct between those students who agreed with the statement of the questionnaire items and those who did not. And then, the researcher used *Frequency Analysis* to get the frequency percentages that reflected the questionnaire responders' choosing frequency by the 3-point Likert-scales, which could mirror students' negative, neutral, and positive attitudes towards reading by each item of the pre-experimental questionnaire. Lastly, the researcher employed *Independent t-test* to test whether there was any significant difference between both groups in terms of students' attitudes towards reading. The researcher also worked out the mean scores and standard deviations of the pre-experimental questionnaires from the experimental

group (an intact class with 55 participants: $N_1=55$) and the control group (another intact class with 55 participants: $N_2=55$) by using *Descriptive Analysis*.

Table 4.2.1, Table 4.2.2, and Table 4.2.3 below present the results of frequency percentages, mean scores and significant differences respectively between the experimental group and the control group of each item on the pre-experimental questionnaire. The data of significant differences below showed that every p value for each questionnaire item was higher than 0.05 ($p>0.05$). Furthermore, the mean scores on each item below showed that there was only nuance between the control group and the experimental group. The calculated data below found that there was no significant difference on the attitudes towards reading between the control group and the experimental group students. Thus, the participants from both groups could take part in the empirical study. The data of the frequency percentages in Table 4.2.1, Table 4.2.2, and Table 4.2.3 below presents both groups of students' specific attitudes towards reading. According to Wenden (1991), in second language learning, attitudes are made up of three components: 1) cognitive component, which refers to learners' beliefs and ideas or opinions about their attitude towards an object; 2) affective component, which refers to learners' feelings and emotions to the object; and 3) behavioral component, which refers to learners' consistent actions or habitual intentions towards the object. In terms of the contents of the questionnaire, the researcher divided the attitudes questionnaire into 3 categories: beliefs, feelings, and inclinations.

Beliefs are students' impressions and reliance to learning of reading,

including items 11, 15, 18, 19, 20, 23, 24, 26 and 29 in Table 4.2.1 below. From the percentages of frequency, most students had positive attitudes towards reading on all these items. They believed that reading is important to them and it could be beneficial to them; and everyone should learn to read in English for expanding their vocabulary and cultural knowledge, improving their other language skills and grammar knowledge, and increasing their critical thinking abilities.

Table 4.2.1 Attitudes towards Reading from Students' Pre-Experimental

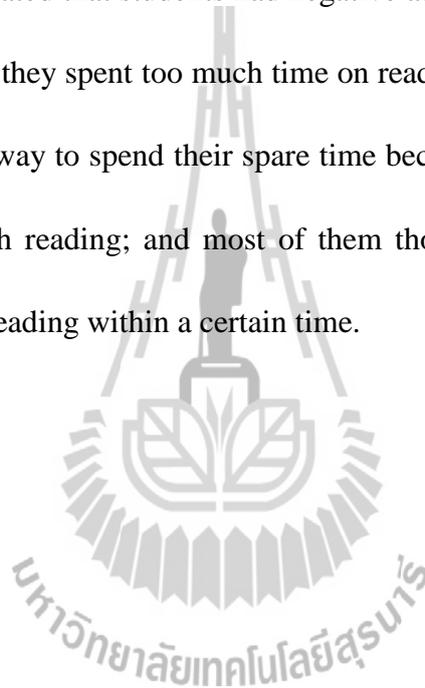
Questionnaires - Beliefs

Attitudes	Questionnaire Contents	G	N	Frequency Percentage (%)			Mean	Sig.
				Disagree (1 point)	Not Sure (2 point)	Agree (3 point)		
Beliefs	11. There is nothing to be gained from reading texts. 从英语文章里我什么都没学到。	1	55	83.6%	7.3%	9.1%	1.18	0.191
		2	55	78.2%	10.9%	10.8%	1.33	
	15. Reading is rewarding to me. 英语阅读使我从中获益。	1	55	1.8%	14.5%	83.6%	2.85	0.820
		2	55	1.8%	9.1%	89.1%	2.87	
	18. Reading helps me to increase my vocabulary. 英语阅读能帮我积累更多词汇量。	1	55	1.8%	7.3%	90.9%	2.82	0.227
		2	55	3.6%	0	96.4%	2.93	
	19. Reading helps me improve other language skills. 阅读能帮我提高其他语言技能, 例如: 口语和写作。	1	55	1.8%	5.5%	92.7%	2.76	0.136
		2	55	1.8%	7.3%	90.9%	2.89	
	20. I can improve my knowledge about grammar by reading. 英语阅读能帮我提高语法知识。	1	55	14.5%	27.3%	58.2%	2.51	0.191
		2	55	7.3%	18.2%	74.5%	2.67	
	23. Reading increases my critical thinking. 阅读能提高我的批判性思维能力。	1	55	14.5%	21.8%	63.6%	2.51	0.301
		2	55	7.3%	21.8%	70.9%	2.64	
	24. Reading is not important in our daily life. 在日常生活中英语阅读并不重要。	1	55	81.8%	3.6%	14.5%	1.42	1.000
		2	55	72.7%	12.7%	14.5%	1.42	
	26. Reading helps us to become familiar with other cultures. 英语阅读帮助我了解其他国家的文化。	1	55	5.5%	10.9%	83.6%	2.85	1.000
		2	55	5.5%	3.6%	90.9%	2.85	
29. Reading is one of the important skills that everybody should learn. 英语阅读是一个每一个人都应该学的重要技能。	1	55	3.6%	5.5%	90.9%	2.78	0.329	
	2	55	3.6%	5.5%	90.9%	2.87		

G = Groups: 1 = experimental group 2 = control group

Feelings are students' emotions of attitudes towards reading, including

items 6, 10, 12, 13, 14, 21, 25, 27 and 28 in Table 4.2.2 below. The percentages of frequency for items 10, 13, 25, 27 and 28 showed that both groups of students had neutral attitudes towards reading because they were not sure whether their feelings were happy, anxious or relaxing while reading; and they did not know whether they would like to have reading class. Furthermore, the percentages of frequency for items 6, 12, 14, and 21 indicated that students had negative attitude towards reading; that is, most students thought they spent too much time on reading English texts; they did not consider reading as a way to spend their spare time because they had not developed a good habit for English reading; and most of them thought reading was difficult so they could not finish reading within a certain time.



**Table 4.2.2 Attitudes towards Reading from Students' Pre-Experimental
Questionnaires - Feelings**

Attitudes	Questionnaire Contents	G	N	Frequency Percentage (%)			Mean	Sig.
				Disagree (1 point)	Not Sure (2 point)	Agree (3 point)		
Feelings	6. Reading is time consuming. 阅读英语文章需要我花大量时间.	1	55	5.5%	21.8%	72.7%	2.36	0.572
		2	55	16.4%	50.9%	32.7%	2.45	
	10. Reading is for learning but not for enjoyment. 英语阅读本身是学习, 不是享受.	1	55	21.8%	50.9%	27.3%	1.78	0.827
		2	55	30.9%	43.6%	25.5%	1.82	
	12. Reading is a good way to spend spare time. 英语阅读是打发时间的好办法.	1	55	38.2%	29.1%	30.9%	1.73	0.717
		2	55	52.7%	27.3%	20.0%	1.67	
	13. Reading excites me. 阅读英语文章让我兴奋.	1	55	29.1%	38.2%	32.7%	1.85	0.068
		2	55	20.0%	47.3%	32.7%	2.13	
	14. Reading texts are not usually good enough to finish. 我总是看不完一些英语阅读文章.	1	55	5.5%	21.8%	72.7%	2.55	0.392
		2	55	20.0%	18.2%	61.8%	2.42	
	21. I think reading in English is an easy task. 我认为英语阅读对我来说是件挺简单的事.	1	55	56.4%	21.8%	21.8%	1.56	0.100
		2	55	40.0%	40.0%	20.0%	1.80	
	25. Reading makes me anxious. 英语阅读使我感到很焦虑和紧张.	1	55	32.7%	32.7%	34.5%	1.78	0.499
		2	55	23.6%	43.6%	32.7%	1.89	
	27. I do not want to take part in reading class. 我总是不想上英语阅读课.	1	55	20.0%	47.3%	32.7%	1.84	0.245
		2	55	25.5%	54.5%	20.0%	1.65	
28. I am so relaxed in reading class. 在英语阅读课堂上我感到很放松.	1	55	38.2%	25.5%	36.4%	2.07	1.000	
	2	55	21.8%	49.1%	29.1%	2.07		

G = Groups: 1 = experimental group 2 = control group

Inclinations are students' intention of attitudes towards reading, including items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 16, 17, and 22 on the questionnaire in Table 4.2.3 below. From the percentages of frequency, students had positive attitudes towards reading on items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 16, 17, and 22, which indicated students were willing to read in English. However, the percentages of frequency for items 8 and 9 showed that both groups of students had neutral attitudes towards reading because they were not sure whether reading was their favorite skill, and they did not know whether reading excited them.

Table 4.2.3 Attitudes towards Reading from Students' Pre-Experimental Questionnaires - Inclinations

Attitudes	Questionnaire Contents	G	N	Frequency Percentage (%)			Mean	Sig.
				Disagree (1 point)	Not Sure (2 point)	Agree (3 point)		
Inclinations	1. Reading in English is fun. 我觉得英语阅读挺有趣。	1	55	3.6%	14.5%	81.8%	2.69	0.664
		2	55	10.9%	14.5%	75.5%	2.64	
	2. I like to read in English. 我喜欢阅读英语文章。	1	55	10.9%	27.3%	61.8%	2.35	0.197
		2	55	10.9%	25.5%	63.6%	2.53	
	3. Reading English is boring. 英语阅读真无聊。	1	55	63.6%	21.8%	14.5%	1.47	0.496
		2	55	70.9%	20.0%	9.1%	1.38	
	4. Time assigned for reading classes is very short. 课堂上，英 语阅读时间总是很短。	1	55	18.2%	23.6%	58.2%	2.20	0.117
		2	55	14.5%	27.3%	58.2%	2.44	
	5. Reading in English is a waste of time. 英语阅读真是浪费时间。	1	55	76.4%	7.3%	16.4%	1.31	0.441
		2	55	85.5%	7.3%	7.3%	1.22	
	7. I consider reading as everyday life activity. 我把英语 阅读看成是我们生活中每天要做 的事。	1	55	7.3%	10.9%	81.8%	2.71	0.334
		2	55	7.3%	3.6%	89.1%	2.82	
	8. I prefer reading comprehension to other language skills. 比起其他三种语 言技能，我更喜欢阅读理解。	1	55	29.1%	34.5%	36.4%	2.11	0.713
		2	55	16.4%	50.9%	32.7%	2.16	
	9. I like to take more reading comprehension courses after this class is finished. 在阅读课 堂结束后，我还想参加阅读课程。	1	55	12.7%	49.1%	38.2%	2.09	0.148
		2	55	16.4%	45.5%	38.2%	2.29	
	16. Reading is worth spending time. 时间花在英语阅读上是很 值得的。	1	55	3.6%	14.5%	81.8%	2.56	0.206
2		55	3.6%	21.8%	74.5%	2.71		
17. There should be more time for free reading during the class. 在课堂上，我们应该有更多 自由阅读时间。	1	55	12.7%	20.0%	67.3%	2.29	0.118	
	2	55	9.1%	30.9%	60.0%	2.51		
22. I want to improve my reading strategies. 我想要提高自 己的英语阅读策略。	1	55	1.8%	5.5%	92.7%	2.87	0.563	
	2	55	7.3%	3.6%	89.1%	2.82		

G = Groups: 1 = experimental group 2 = control group

In short, the results of students' pre-experimental questionnaires from the experimental group and the control group indicated that the participants of both groups' attitudes towards reading had no significant difference so they could continue to take part in the experiment and then respond to the post-experimental questionnaires and blog interviews. Although more than 50% of the items on the questionnaires showed that students' attitudes towards reading were positive, there

were still some negative and neutral sides that the students needed to be adjusted and changed. Making an interesting and interactive reading class seems to be an essential task for teachers.

The next section reports the results from students' post-experimental questionnaires.

4.2.2 Results of Students' Post-Experimental Questionnaire

The post-experimental questionnaire in the present study is a questionnaire employed after the researcher carried out the experiment. The aim of using the questionnaire is to test whether students' attitudes towards reading have any positive change after the 15-week empirical teaching. Furthermore, its data need to be compared with the data from the pre-experimental questionnaire so that the researcher could find the answer to Research Question 2. The post-questionnaire was also adapted from Rashtchi and Hajihassani's (2010) reading attitudes questionnaire (see Appendix II).

This sub-section analyzes the results of students' post-experimental questionnaire. Table 4.2.4, Table 4.2.5, and Table 4.2.6 below present the results of frequency percentages, mean scores and significant differences respectively between the experimental group and the control group through each item on the post-experimental questionnaire.

Table 4.2.4 on the next page includes students' beliefs of attitudes towards reading. In the post-experimental questionnaire, the data of items 18, 20, 23, 26 and 29 have significant differences ($p < 0.05$) between the experimental group and the

control group. Furthermore, from the percentages of frequency on these items that have significant differences, the experimental group has more positive attitudes towards reading than the control group. That is, after the empirical teaching, more and more students from the experimental group believe that learning to read could make them better in learning other English knowledge and skills; and more and more students believe that reading is essential to them.

Table 4.2.4 Attitudes towards Reading from Students' Post-Experimental Questionnaires - Beliefs

Attitudes	Questionnaire Contents	G	N	Frequency Percentage (%)			Mean	Sig.
				Disagree (1 point)	Not Sure (2 point)	Agree (3 point)		
Beliefs	11. There is nothing to be gained from reading texts. 从英语文章里我什么都没学到。	1	55	87.3%	10.9%	1.8%	1.15	0.258
		2	55	81.8%	10.9%	7.3%	1.25	
	15. Reading is rewarding to me. 英语阅读使我从中获益。	1	55	0	1.8%	98.2%	2.98	1.000
		2	55	0	1.8%	98.2%	2.98	
	18. Reading helps me to increase my vocabulary. 英语阅读能帮我积累更多词汇量。	1	55	0	0	100%	3.00	0.017
		2	55	7.3	3.6%	89.1%	2.82	
	19. Reading helps me improve other language skills. 阅读能帮我提高其他语言技能, 例如: 口语和写作。	1	55	3.6%	9.1%	87.3%	2.84	0.434
		2	55	3.6%	16.4%	80.0%	2.76	
	20. I can improve my knowledge about grammar by reading. 英语阅读能帮我提高语法知识。	1	55	0	16.4%	83.6%	2.84	0.003
		2	55	10.9%	27.3%	61.8%	2.51	
	23. Reading increases my critical thinking. 阅读能提高我的批判性思维能力。	1	55	1.8%	3.6%	94.5%	2.93	0.000
		2	55	9.1%	30.9%	60.0%	2.51	
	24. Reading is not important in our daily life. 在日常生活中英语阅读并不重要。	1	55	83.6%	9.1%	7.3%	1.24	0.153
		2	55	72.7%	12.7%	14.5%	1.42	
	26. Reading helps us to become familiar with other cultures. 英语阅读帮助我了解其他国家的文化。	1	55	0	0	100%	3.00	0.019
		2	55	3.6%	7.3%	89.1%	2.85	
	29. Reading is one of the important skills that everybody should learn. 英语阅读是一个每一个人都应该学的重要技能。	1	55	0	0	100%	3.00	0.003
		2	55	5.5%	10.9%	83.6%	2.78	

G = Groups: 1 = experimental group 2 = control group

Table 4.2.5 below includes students' feelings of attitudes towards reading.

The data of items 6, 10, 12, 13, 14, 21, 27 and 28 have significant differences ($p < 0.05$) between the experimental group and the control group in the post-experimental questionnaire. Moreover, from the percentages of frequency on these items that have significant differences, students in the experimental group have more positive attitudes towards reading than the control group. It means that, after the empirical teaching, more and more students from the experimental group felt good with English reading than the control group. Although the data of the most items in feelings show that students' attitudes are positive, the percentages of frequency on items 14 and 21 present students' uncertain feelings; that is, they were not sure whether reading was easy for them and whether they could finish a reading text in a certain time. It means that reading was still difficult work for students, even for students who felt good with English reading.

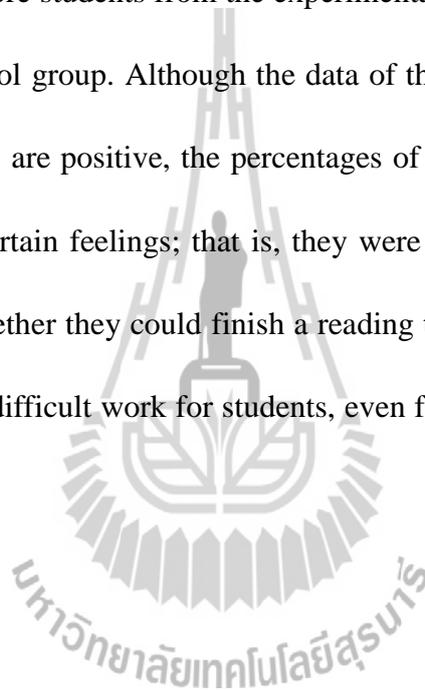


Table 4.2.5 Attitudes towards Reading from Students' Post-Experimental Questionnaires - Feelings

Attitudes	Questionnaire Contents	G	N	Frequency Percentage (%)			Mean	Sig.
				Disagree (1 point)	Not Sure (2 point)	Agree (3 point)		
Feelings	6. Reading is time consuming. 阅读英语文章需要我花大量时间.	1	55	52.7%	34.5%	12.7%	1.60	0.000
		2	55	29.1%	5.5%	65.5%	2.36	
	10. Reading is for learning but not for enjoyment. 英语阅读本身是学习, 不是享受。	1	55	83.6%	16.4%	0	1.26	0.000
		2	55	54.5%	12.7%	32.7%	1.78	
	12. Reading is a good way to spend spare time. 英语阅读是打发时间的好办法。	1	55	0	12.7%	87.3%	2.87	0.000
		2	55	47.3%	32.7%	20.0%	1.73	
	13. Reading excites me. 阅读英语文章让我兴奋。	1	55	0	41.8%	58.2%	2.58	0.000
		2	55	41.8%	30.9%	27.3%	1.85	
	14. Reading texts are not usually good enough to finish. 我总是看不完一些英语阅读文章。	1	55	20.0%	60.0%	20.0%	2.00	0.000
		2	55	12.7%	16.4%	70.9%	2.58	
	21. I think reading in English is an easy task. 我认为英语阅读对我来说是件挺简单的事。	1	55	10.9%	65.5%	23.6%	2.13	0.000
		2	55	58.2%	27.3%	14.5%	1.56	
	25. Reading makes me anxious. 英语阅读使我感到很焦虑和紧张。	1	55	52.8%	21.8%	20.0%	1.62	0.290
		2	55	45.5%	30.9%	23.6%	1.78	
27. I do not want to take part in reading class. 我总是不想上英语阅读课。	1	55	69.1%	16.4%	14.5%	1.45	0.013	
	2	55	43.6%	29.1%	27.3%	1.84		
28. I am so relaxed in reading class. 在英语阅读课堂上我感到很放松。	1	55	12.7%	20.0%	67.3%	2.55	0.002	
	2	55	29.1%	34.5%	36.4%	2.07		

G = Groups: 1 = experimental group 2 = control group

The following Table 4.2.6 includes students' inclinations of attitudes towards reading. The data of items 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 16 and 17 have significant differences ($p < 0.05$) between the experimental group and the control group in the post-experimental questionnaire. Furthermore, from the percentages of frequency on these items that have significant differences, the experimental group has more positive attitudes towards reading than the control group. That is, after the experiment, more and more students from the experimental group intend to take persistent actions on learning English reading than the control group.

Table 4.2.6 Attitudes towards Reading from Students' Post-Experimental Questionnaires - Inclinations

Attitudes	Questionnaire Contents	G	N	Frequency Percentage (%)			Mean	Sig.
				Disagree (1 point)	Not Sure (2 point)	Agree (3 point)		
Inclinations	1. Reading in English is fun. 我觉得英语阅读挺有趣。	1	55	3.6%	7.3%	89.1%	2.85	0.165
		2	55	9.1%	10.9%	80.0%	2.71	
	2. I like to read in English. 我喜欢阅读英语文章。	1	55	1.8%	18%	96.4%	2.95	0.000
		2	55	18.2%	29.1%	52.7%	2.35	
	3. Reading English is boring. 英语阅读真无聊。	1	55	85.5%	14.5%	0	1.15	0.004
		2	55	67.3%	18.2%	14.5%	1.47	
	4. Time assigned for reading classes is very short. 课堂上，英 语阅读时间总是很短。	1	55	1.8%	3.6%	94.5%	2.93	0.000
		2	55	25.5%	25.5%	49.0%	2.24	
	5. Reading in English is a waste of time. 英语阅读真是浪费时间。	1	55	87.3%	7.3%	5.4%	1.18	0.263
		2	55	80.0%	9.1%	10.9%	1.31	
	7. I consider reading as everyday life activity. 我把英语 阅读看成是我们生活中每天要做 的事。	1	55	5.5%	9.1%	85.5%	2.80	0.412
		2	55	9.1%	10.9%	80.0%	2.71	
	8. I prefer reading comprehension to other language skills. 比起其他三种语 言技能，我更喜欢阅读理解。	1	55	0	38.2%	61.8%	1.38	0.000
		2	55	30.9%	27.3%	41.8%	2.11	
	9. I like to take more reading comprehension courses after this class is finished. 在阅读课 堂结束后，我还想参加阅读课程。	1	55	0	10.9%	89.1%	2.89	0.000
		2	55	20.0%	50.9%	29.1%	2.09	
	16. Reading is worth spending time. 时间花在英语阅读上是很 值得的。	1	55	0	3.6%	96.4%	2.96	0.000
2		55	9.1%	25.5%	65.5%	2.56		
17. There should be more time for free reading during the class. 在课堂上，我们应该有更多 自由阅读时间。	1	55	0	7.3%	92.7%	2.93	0.000	
	2	55	20.0%	30.9%	49.1%	2.29		
22. I want to improve my reading strategies. 我想要提高自 己的英语阅读策略。	1	55	0	9.1%	90.9%	2.91	0.606	
	2	55	3.6%	5.5%	90.9%	2.87		

G = Groups: 1 = experimental group 2 = control group

4.2.3 Answers to Research Question 2

The second purpose of the present study is to investigate how students' attitudes towards reading are promoted through the utilization of the social constructivist BALL. Accordingly, the Research Question 2 is: *How are students' attitudes towards reading promoted by the implementation of the social constructivist BALL?* In this section, in order to answer Research Question 2, the researcher

summarized the data analyzed above into tables below to understand whether students' attitudes towards reading are positively promoted through the utilization of the social constructivist BALL, and to find out their altered attitudes towards reading for answering this research question. Table 4.2.7, Table 4.2.8, and Table 4.2.9 below summarize the data of frequency percentages, mean scores and significant differences respectively between pre-experimental and post-experimental questionnaires according to beliefs, feelings and inclinations of attitudes categories from the experimental group.

In Table 4.2.7 below, items 15, 18, 20, 23, 26 and 29 show that students' beliefs have significant differences ($p < 0.05$) between the pre-experimental questionnaire items and the post-experimental questionnaire items for the experimental group. Furthermore, from each item's frequency percentages and mean scores in this beliefs category of attitudes, students' attitudes were positively promoted.

Table 4.2.7 Attitudes towards Reading from the Experimental Group Students' Pre-Experimental and Post-Experimental Questionnaires - Beliefs

Attitudes	Questionnaire	P	N	Frequency Percentage (%)	Mean	Sig.
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Contents			Disagree (1 point)	Not Sure (2 point)	Agree (3 point)			
Beliefs	11. There is nothing to be gained from reading texts. 从英语文章里我什么都没学到。	1	55	83.6%	7.3%	9.1%	1.18	
		2	55	87.3%	10.9%	1.8%	1.15	
								0.274
	15. Reading is rewarding to me. 英语阅读使我从中获益。	1	55	1.8%	14.5%	83.6%	2.85	
		2	55	0	1.8%	98.2%	2.98	
								0.010
	18. Reading helps me to increase my vocabulary. 英语阅读能帮我积累更多词汇量。	1	55	1.8%	7.3%	90.9%	2.82	
		2	55	0	0	100%	3.00	
								0.033
	19. Reading helps me improve other language skills. 阅读能帮我提高其他语言技能, 例如: 口语和写作。	1	55	1.8%	5.5%	92.7%	2.76	
		2	55	3.6%	9.1%	87.3%	2.84	
								0.353
	20. I can improve my knowledge about grammar by reading. 英语阅读能帮我提高语法知识。	1	55	14.5%	27.3%	58.2%	2.51	
		2	55	0	16.4%	83.6%	2.84	
								0.001
	23. Reading increases my critical thinking. 阅读能提高我的批判性思维能力。	1	55	14.5%	21.8%	63.6%	2.51	
		2	55	1.8%	3.6%	94.5%	2.93	
								0.000
24. Reading is not important in our daily life. 在日常生活 中英语阅读并不重要。	1	55	81.8%	3.6%	14.5%	1.42		
	2	55	83.6%	9.1%	7.3%	1.24		
							0.467	
26. Reading helps us to become familiar with other cultures. 英语阅读帮助我了解其他国家的文化。	1	55	5.5%	10.9%	83.6%	2.85		
	2	55	0	0	100%	3.00		
							0.004	
29. Reading is one of the important skills that everybody should learn. 英语阅读是一个每一个人都应该学的重要技能。	1	55	3.6%	5.5%	90.9%	2.78		
	2	55	0	0	100%	3.00		
							0.034	

P = Pre/Post: 1 = pre-questionnaire 2 = post-questionnaire

In Table 4.2.8 below, all items in students' feeling of attitudes show that students' beliefs have significant differences ($p < 0.05$) between the pre-experimental questionnaire items and the post-experimental questionnaire items for the experimental group. Moreover, from frequency percentages and mean scores of each item in this feelings category of attitudes, students' attitudes were positively promoted after the experiment.

Table 4.2.8 Attitudes towards Reading from the Experimental Group Students' Pre-Experimental and Post-Experimental Questionnaires - Feelings

Attitudes	Questionnaire Contents	P	N	Frequency Percentage (%)			Mean	Sig.
				Disagree (1 point)	Not Sure (2 point)	Agree (3 point)		
Feelings	6. Reading is time consuming. 阅读英语文章需要我花大量时间.	1	55	5.5%	21.8%	72.7%	2.36	0.000
		2	55	52.7%	34.5%	12.7%	1.60	
	10. Reading is for learning but not for enjoyment. 英语阅读本身是学习, 不是享受。	1	55	21.8%	50.9%	27.3%	1.78	0.000
		2	55	83.6%	16.4%	0	1.26	
	12. Reading is a good way to spend spare time. 英语阅读是打发时间的好办法。	1	55	38.2%	29.1%	30.9%	1.73	0.000
		2	55	0	12.7%	87.3%	2.87	
	13. Reading excites me. 阅读英语文章让我兴奋。	1	55	29.1%	38.2%	32.7%	1.85	0.000
		2	55	0	41.8%	58.2%	2.58	
	14. Reading texts are not usually good enough to finish. 我总是看不完一些英语阅读文章。	1	55	5.5%	21.8%	72.7%	2.55	0.000
		2	55	20.0%	60.0%	20.0%	2.00	
	21. I think reading in English is an easy task. 我认为英语阅读对我来说是件挺简单的事。	1	55	56.4%	21.8%	21.8%	1.56	0.001
		2	55	10.9%	65.5%	23.6%	2.13	
	25. Reading makes me anxious. 英语阅读使我感到很焦虑和紧张。	1	55	32.7%	32.7%	34.5%	1.78	0.012
		2	55	52.8%	21.8%	20.0%	1.62	
27. I do not want to take part in reading class. 我总是不想上英语阅读课。	1	55	20.0%	47.3%	32.7%	1.84	0.012	
	2	55	69.1%	16.4%	14.5%	1.45		
28. I am so relaxed in reading class. 在英语阅读课堂上我感到很放松。	1	55	38.2%	25.5%	36.4%	2.07	0.000	
	2	55	12.7%	20.0%	67.3%	2.55		

P = Pre/Post: 1 = pre-questionnaire 2 = post-questionnaire

In Table 4.2.9 below, items 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 16 and 17 in students' inclinations of attitudes show that students' learning tendency has significant differences ($p < 0.05$) between the pre-experimental questionnaire items and the post-experimental questionnaire items for the experimental group. In addition, from frequency percentages and mean scores of each item in this inclinations category of attitudes, students' attitudes were positively promoted after the experiment.

Table 4.2.9 Attitudes towards Reading from the Experimental Group Students'

Pre-Experimental and Post-Experimental Questionnaires - Inclinations

Attitudes	Questionnaire Contents	P	N	Frequency Percentage (%)			Mean	Sig.
				Disagree (1 point)	Not Sure (2 point)	Agree (3 point)		
Inclinations	1. Reading in English is fun. 我觉得英语阅读挺有趣。	1	55	3.6%	14.5%	81.8%	2.69	0.422
		2	55	3.6%	7.3%	89.1%	2.85	
	2. I like to read in English. 我喜欢阅读英语文章。	1	55	10.9%	27.3%	61.8%	2.35	0.000
		2	55	1.8%	18%	96.4%	2.95	
	3. Reading English is boring. 英语阅读真无聊。	1	55	63.6%	21.8%	14.5%	1.47	0.002
		2	55	85.5%	14.5%	0	1.15	
	4. Time assigned for reading classes is very short. 课堂上, 英语阅读时间总是很短。	1	55	18.2%	23.6%	58.2%	2.20	0.000
		2	55	1.8%	3.6%	94.5%	2.93	
	5. Reading in English is a waste of time. 英语阅读真是浪费时间。	1	55	76.4%	7.3%	16.4%	1.31	0.081
		2	55	87.3%	7.3%	5.4%	1.18	
	7. I consider reading as everyday life activity. 我把英语阅读看成是我们生活中每天要做的事。	1	55	7.3%	10.9%	81.8%	2.71	0.607
		2	55	5.5%	9.1%	85.5%	2.80	
	8. I prefer reading comprehension to other language skills. 比起其他三种语言技能, 我更喜欢阅读理解。	1	55	29.1%	34.5%	36.4%	2.11	0.000
		2	55	0	38.2%	61.8%	1.38	
	9. I like to take more reading comprehension courses after this class is finished. 在阅读课堂结束后, 我还想参加阅读课程。	1	55	12.7%	49.1%	38.2%	2.09	0.000
		2	55	0	10.9%	89.1%	2.89	
	16. Reading is worth spending time. 时间花在英语阅读上是很值得的。	1	55	3.6%	14.5%	81.8%	2.56	0.014
		2	55	0	3.6%	96.4%	2.96	
	17. There should be more time for free reading during the class. 在课堂上, 我们应该有更多自由阅读时间。	1	55	12.7%	20.0%	67.3%	2.29	0.000
		2	55	0	7.3%	92.7%	2.93	
22. I want to improve my reading strategies. 我想要提高自己的英语阅读策略。	1	55	1.8%	5.5%	92.7%	2.87	1.000	
	2	55	0	9.1%	90.9%	2.91		

P = Pre/Post: 1 = pre-questionnaire 2 = post-questionnaire

According to the analysis above, the first answer to the Research Question 2 is that students' attitudes towards reading were positively promoted by the implementation of the social constructivist BALL. The tables in sub-sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 demonstrated the comparisons between both groups' data in the

pre-experimental and the post-experimental questionnaires.

Moreover, comparing the data collected from students' medium and negative attitudes of the experimental group on the post-questionnaire with the data on the pre-questionnaire, as the researcher summarized Table 4.2.10 below, 11 items were significantly altered after the experiment of the social constructivist BALL. These are items 6, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 21, 25, 27 and 28. In the pre-experimental questionnaire, frequency percentages of items 8, 9, 10, 13, 25, 27 and 28 showed that students' attitudes towards reading were medium; but, after the experiment, in the post-experimental questionnaire, frequency percentages of these items indicate that students' medium attitudes towards reading were promoted to positive attitudes. Most students had come to enjoy reading and reading classes, and had begun to feel well with learning English reading. In addition, students' negative attitudes in the pre-experimental questionnaire towards reading were found in items 6 and 12, in which their attitudes were altered into positive attitudes in the post-experimental questionnaire. However, the other students' negative attitudes towards reading in the pre-questionnaire were found in items 14 and 21, in which their attitudes were altered into neutral attitudes in the post-experimental questionnaire. Most students had begun to spend spare time on English reading; and most students still felt that reading might be difficult work, and they might not finish reading in a short time.

In short, the summary of students' attitudes after the teaching experiment above provides the answer to the Research Question 2.

Table 4.2.10 A Summary of Students' Attitudes after the Experiment

Attitudes	Questionnaire Contents	P	N	Frequency Percentage (%)			Mean	Sig.
				Disagree (1 point)	Not Sure (2 point)	Agree (3 point)		
Altered Items	6. Reading is time consuming. 阅读英语文章需要我花大量时间。	1	55	5.5%	21.8%	72.7%	2.36	0.000
		2	55	52.7%	34.5%	12.7%	1.60	
	8. I prefer reading comprehension to other language skills. 比起其他三种语言技能, 我更喜欢阅读理解。	1	55	29.1%	34.5%	36.4%	2.11	0.000
		2	55	0	38.2%	61.8%	1.38	
	9. I like to take more reading comprehension courses after this class is finished. 在阅读课堂结束后, 我还想参加阅读课程。	1	55	12.7%	49.1%	38.2%	2.09	0.000
		2	55	0	10.9%	89.1%	2.89	
	10. Reading is for learning but not for enjoyment. 英语阅读本身是学习, 不是享受。	1	55	21.8%	50.9%	27.3%	1.78	0.000
		2	55	83.6%	16.4%	0	1.26	
	12. Reading is a good way to spend spare time. 英语阅读是打发时间的好办法。	1	55	38.2%	29.1%	30.9%	1.73	0.000
		2	55	0	12.7%	87.3%	2.87	
	13. Reading excites me. 阅读英语文章让我兴奋。	1	55	29.1%	38.2%	32.7%	1.85	0.000
		2	55	0	41.8%	58.2%	2.58	
	14. Reading texts are not usually good enough to finish. 我总是看不完一些英语阅读文章。	1	55	5.5%	21.8%	72.7%	2.55	0.000
		2	55	20.0%	60.0%	20.0%	2.00	
	21. I think reading in English is an easy task. 我认为英语阅读对我来说是件挺简单的事。	1	55	56.4%	21.8%	21.8%	1.56	0.001
		2	55	10.9%	65.5%	23.6%	2.13	
	25. Reading makes me anxious. 英语阅读使我感到很焦虑和紧张。	1	55	32.7%	32.7%	34.5%	1.78	0.012
		2	55	52.8%	21.8%	20.0%	1.62	
	27. I do not want to take part in reading class. 我总是不想上英语阅读课。	1	55	20.0%	47.3%	32.7%	1.84	0.012
		2	55	69.1%	16.4%	14.5%	1.45	
28. I am so relaxed in reading class. 在英语阅读课堂上我感到很放松。	1	55	38.2%	25.5%	36.4%	2.07	0.000	
	2	55	12.7%	20.0%	67.3%	2.55		

P = Pre/Post: 1 = pre-questionnaire 2 = post-questionnaire

The next section is the data analysis of students' interviews for answering Research Question 1 and Research Question 3.

4.3 Results of Students' Interview

This section reports the results of students' blog interview. The researcher uses a qualitative research method to analyze the data, and then summarizes students' opinions so that the data reveal the answer to Research Question 3 according to the third research purpose, that is, to explore students' opinions on the social constructivist BALL reading class, and to study how the social constructivist BALL helped students improve their EFL reading comprehension.

Fifty-five students who took part in the blog-based reading class were asked to participate in the blog interview. Finally, 40 students responded to the interview questions. The results from the blog interviews conducted with the 40 interviewees are analyzed as follows:

Firstly, with regard to the opinions of the importance of reading, 100% interviewees responded positively. Twenty-eight (35%) students believed that their vocabulary could be expanded through learning reading; 13 students (16%) students thought their grammar and writing could be improved; 9 students (11%) thought reading could promote their speaking; 8 (10%) students believed their cultural background could be expanded; 8 (10%) students thought their comprehensive skill and ability could be cultivated by reading; 6 (8%) students considered their language proficiency level could be improved; 6 (8%) students believed they could expand other aspects of knowledge through reading; and 1 (1%) student thought her listening skill could be promoted by reading. Below are examples of some interviewees' opinions:

Student6[+VCU56]: *“Reading is important to English study. Reading is good for our vocabulary. We can understand some culture of English-speaking countries. And some of our thinking from article.”*

Student17[+VU56]: *“Reading is important to English study, because we cannot only accumulate new vocabulary and sentences, but also improve reading comprehensive skills as well as reading speed. (Translated)”*

*See coding scheme table in Appendix VI (deduce the rest from this coding scheme).

Secondly, regarding students' experience of reading, 25 (56%) interviewees often read in English; and 20 (44%) interviewees did not often read in English. They shared the reason why they usually read: 5 (11%) students thought that reading is a necessary expertise required in their major; 12 (27%) students enjoyed reading in English; 3 (7%) students wanted to improve English speaking; 2 (4%) students needed cultural knowledge expansion; and 3 (7%) students often knew current news and events to broaden their information knowledge. The interviewees explained the reasons why they did not usually read: 11 (24%) students found English reading was a very difficult task because of their low English proficiency level and limited vocabulary; 4 (9%) students thought they were too busy to read in English; 3 (7%) students felt the reading materials they had were very dull and boring; and 2 (4%) students thought that they had not formed a good reading habit. Examples of some interviewees' opinions are as follows:

Student1[-PE]: *“Generally not, because I don't have enough time, and I think that's boring.”*

Student13[+PE]: *“To be honest, I don't like to read in English in the past because it is too difficult to me. But, now I'm an English major, I know its importance, so I'm trying my best to learn to read every day. (Translated)”*

Student30[+PE]: *“Yes, I often read China Daily on the Internet , because I can learn news and different culture by reading.”*

Student39[-PE]: *“No, I’m not interested in reading English because my vocabulary is so limited that I cannot understand articles. (Translated)”*

Thirdly, with respect to the interviewees’ experience of blog reading, 26 (68%) of them had not read English on blogs; and 12 (32%) of them read on blogs before. They offered some suggestions on what types of reading materials they are interested in reading on blogs: 15 (40%) students wanted to read short essays on different stories; 11 (30%) students would like to read about encyclopedic knowledge, such as science and technology, culture, history, tourism, environment, and animals, etc.; 10 (27%) students liked to read lyric proses and quotations; and 2 (5%) students preferred image-text articles. Examples of some interviewees’ opinions are as follows:

Student6[-FS]: *“No, I haven’t read English in blog. I would like to read about some lyric proses and short essays of different stories. The articles should be as short as possible because I have limited vocabulary (Translated).”*

Student30[+FS]: *“Yes, I extremely like reading short and funny story.”*

Fourthly, as for students’ preferences of reading on paper or on computer, 35 (88%) students preferred to read on paper rather than on computer, and the other 5 (12%) students preferred to read on computer rather than on paper. The reasons that they liked to read on paper but not on computer were because: 9 (23%) students found that it is more convenient for them to take notes and mark knowledge points on paper books so that they could review the points; 8 (20%) students thought that computers were bad for their health because of radioactive harm to their eyes; 5 (13%) students

felt that there were many distractions on the Internet, and sometimes information on the Internet was not accurate enough; 5 (13%) students found it more convenient to read on paper because they could read them at any time and everywhere; and 8 (20%) students felt that paper was more textured to them, and they were used to reading on papers. The reasons that they liked to read on computer rather than on paper were because: 2 (5%) students thought computer reading is more authentic and interesting; 2 (5%) students felt that there were more information on the Internet for them to search for references; and 1 (3%) student found that he could remember knowledge points easier through a computer because it provided more vivid content for them.

Below are examples of some interviewees' opinions:

Student6[b]: *"I enjoy reading a print book, because my eyes will fatigue when I use computer for a long time. And radiation is not good for health."*

Student13[c]: *"I'd like to read on computers more than on papers because we had been read on papers for a long time, computers attracted me more, and we won't be boring. (Translated)"*

Student24[b]: *"I like reading books originally. When I see some sentences I like, I can be drawn or copied. And book reading will have the feeling of reading."*

Fifthly, as for the students' opinions towards the researcher's blog-based reading class, 35 (87%) interviewees' opinions were positive and 5 (13%) of them were negative. Students' positive opinions varied: 15 (37%) of them thought that the blog-based class provided them a very modern and technological learning environment, in which they could be attracted and motivated in English reading; 6 (16%) of them enjoyed communicating with other students and teacher, and they felt

that they could learn more knowledge from the peers and the teacher on blogs; 5 (12%) of them thought the Internet made them learn much information about new vocabulary, grammar and cultural background on blogs; 4 (11%) of them liked to have their own learning space on blog because they could display knowledge they had learnt; 4 (9%) of them felt that blog-based class improved their writing, speaking, listening and critical thinking skills because they thought they have learnt some English knowledge from reading on blog, and the knowledge could supplement other English skills; and one (2%) of them liked the tools on blog, e.g. pictures, videos and comment boards, etc., which helped her understand more and memorize more about the learning points.

Students' negative opinions are as follows: 2 (4%) of them preferred reading on papers than on a computer because of their learning style; 2 (4%) of them considered the blog-based class was money and time consuming, because they did not have personal computers so they had to go to the library or net bars to accomplish their reading task on blogs, which made them some inconvenience on time and money; and the last 2 (5%) students felt they learnt nothing from the blog-based class because they did neither usually participate in the discussion of the blog reading modules nor accomplish the reading tasks assigned by the teacher.

Student24[+1]: *“That's good, English blog is a new method of reading. We can use modern technology to increase knowledge.”*

Student29[+2&6]: *“I do believe, we can exchange and share different ideas or viewpoints each other. In this way our English reading could be promoted by the aids of blogs.”*

Student7[-8]: *“It's useful for me learn English, but sometimes I think it waste much time and money because I don't have my own computer. So I have to go to net bars to do the blog reading assignments every time. (Translated)”*

Student37[-7b]: *“Well, I don't know. I think it varies from person to person. As for me, I would rather read on paper rather than on computer. (Translated)”*

Sixthly, regarding ways of the social constructivist BALL's impact and assistance on the learners' reading comprehension, 10 (25%) students mentioned that blog tools including pictures, videos and comment boards helped them understand reading texts; among these tools, 4 (11%) students considered that the comment boards were very helpful to them, 3 (7%) students thought that pictures were helpful to them, and 3 (7%) students felt that videos were useful to them. Moreover, 22 (54%) students enjoyed sharing ideas with others and they thought that they learnt much knowledge from others' comments on blogs, e.g. new vocabulary, grammar correction, different information, etc.; and they were also encouraged by the teacher and other students to learn and communicate. In addition, 8 (21%) students thought that writing reflection papers helped them deepen the understanding of the target reading text, fix the language points in memory, and improve critical thinking and writing skills.

Student24[+o4&6]: *“It's very useful. Pictures, video can increase my understanding of the content. The comments of others gave me a lot of good advices, they let me know something else”*

Student23[+o5]: *“Yes, occasionally, because the teacher told us to do our homework let the leader to comment on, so many of our leader will correct the wrong things, the teacher went to check, for our comments, let me realize my mistake, of course also improves reading.”*

At last, concerning the improved aspects of reading, 16 (40%) students felt that the social constructivist BALL reading class helped them expand vocabulary; 12 (30%) students thought that it helped them know more about cultural background; and 12 (30%) students considered that it promoted their reading comprehensive ability.

Student1[V]: *“Vocabulary, because in the article have a lot of words don't know, I can look up dictionary or ask the teacher and the students to understand.”*

Student15[C]: *“I think my culture background improve a lot.”*

Student37[VCU]: *“I think the three aspects of reading were improved. My vocabulary was expanded. I start to know more about western culture. My comprehensive ability is gradually deepened, and I know the importance of thinking when I read. (Translated)”*

4.3.1 Answers to Research Question 3

The third purpose of the present study is to explore students' opinions on the social constructivist BALL reading class, and to study how the BALL can help with their EFL reading comprehension in the English reading class. Accordingly, the Research Question 3 is: *What are the students' opinions on the social constructivist BALL reading class? How can the social constructivist BALL help with their EFL reading comprehension in the English reading class?* Furthermore, the interview data also find the answer to the Research Question 1: *In what way does the social constructivist BALL have an impact on improving EFL students' reading comprehension?*

Figure 4.2 below is a pie graph with percentages, which summarizes the students' positive and negative opinions on the social constructivist BALL to answer

the Research Question 3:

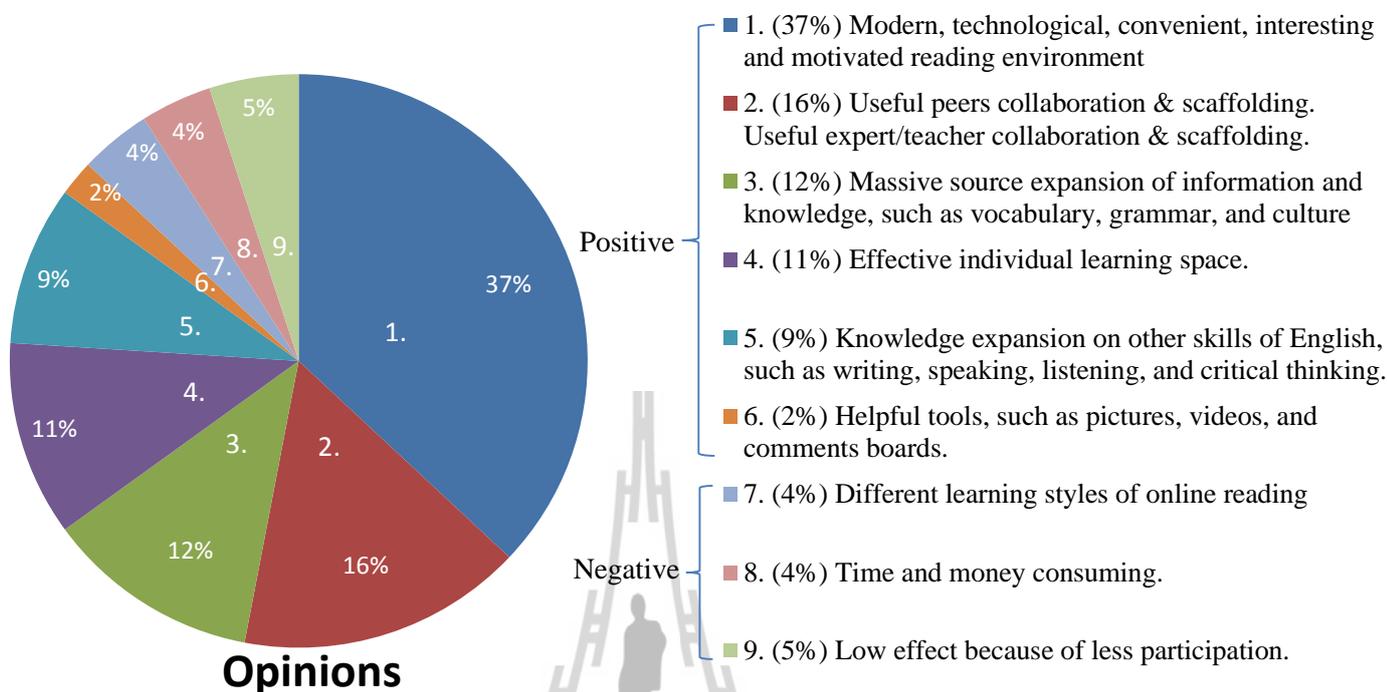


Figure 4.2 Students' Opinions on the Social Constructivist BALL

The researcher summarized 6 points of students' positive opinions on the social constructivist BALL: 1) 37% of students thought that the social constructivist BALL class was a modern, technological, convenient, interesting and motivated reading environment, e.g. student5[+1] said: "We are interested in reading because it is a new and attractive learning environment...(translated)"; 2) 16% of students felt that they were involved in a useful peers and experts' collaboration and scaffolding learning atmosphere, e.g. student9[+2] said: "It's so good, I like it because we can learn from each other, and I like to exchange of ideas..."; 3) 12% of students enjoyed learning English reading in the blog-based learning environment with massive source expansion of information and knowledge, such as vocabulary, grammar, and culture, e.g. student26[+3] said: "I think it

is so good because we can have more source of information and we can learn more knowledge.”; 4) 11% of students considered that the blog-based learning environment was an effective individual learning space, e.g. student29[+4] said: “A blog-based English reading class is a good way to learn because everybody has a chance to do something he or she wants on his or her own blog.”; 5) 9% of students thought their knowledge on other skills of English, such as writing, speaking, listening, and critical thinking were expanded, e.g. student19[+5] said: “I’m willing to learn in this environment because my reading comprehension is improved as well as my speaking skill (translated)” .; and 6) 2% of students thought the blog learning environment provided some helpful tools for them, such as pictures, videos, and comments boards, e.g. student13[+6] said: “Blog tools are useful for me because we can understand more from pictures and videos, and learn knowledge from other’s comments (translated)”.

The researcher also summarized students’ negative opinions on the social constructivist BALL: 1) 4% of students did not like reading on blogs because of their different learning styles of online reading, e.g. student10[-7] said: “I like reading by books rather than computers, because the computer is bad for our health if we use it all the time.”; 2) 4% of students thought it was time and money consuming, e.g. student7[-8] said: “It’s useful for me to learn English, but sometimes I think it waste much time and money.”; and 3) 5% of students felt it had low effect because of their less participation, e.g. student32[-9] said: “I don’t like English so I don’t feel that it improved my reading comprehension”(translated). The reasons for these positive and negative opinions will be discussed in the next chapter.

To answer the research questions (*How can the social constructivist BALL help with their EFL reading comprehension in the English reading class, and in what way does the social constructivist BALL have an impact on improving EFL students' reading comprehension?*), the researcher summed up students' ideas of the ways that impact and help with students' reading comprehension as following Figure 4.3 with percentages:

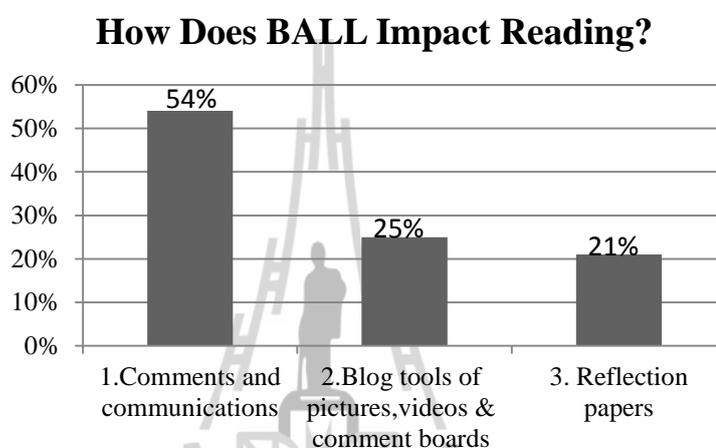


Figure 4.3 Ways Impact and Help with Students' Reading Comprehension

Figure 4.3 above demonstrates the question of how the social constructivist BALL impact and help with students' reading comprehension. There are mainly three ways: 1) comments and communications made students learn more knowledge and ideas with each other from their comments and communications on blogs; 2) blog tools of pictures, videos and comment boards helped them easily understand and memorize target knowledge and information; and 3) reflection papers promoted their application of target knowledge, e.g. vocabulary, grammar, writing and speaking, etc. and their critical thinking.

The next section is a summary of this chapter.

4.4 Summary

This chapter reported the data analysis for the main study, which included the data analyses of the pre-experimental reading test and post-experimental reading test, pre-experimental questionnaire and post-experimental questionnaire, and the blog interviews involving both quantitative and qualitative analyses. In the next chapter, the discussions of the findings, pedagogical implications, limitations and recommendations of the study will be presented.



CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSIONS

This chapter discusses the research findings of the main study. The discussions include the effects of the social constructivist blog-based reading class in accordance with the findings of the reading comprehension tests (the pre-experimental reading test and post-experimental reading test) and the attitudes questionnaires (pre-experimental questionnaires and the post-experimental questionnaires); meanwhile, the discussions also include the students' opinions on the social constructivist blog-based reading class according to the findings of the blog interviews. Furthermore, the answers to the three research questions in this study are given, and the explanations of the reasons for these answers are presented. It ends with a summary of this chapter of the present study.

5.1 Effects of the Social Constructivist BALL

The results from the pre-experimental reading test and the post-experimental reading test reported in section 4.1 deal with Research Question 1: *In what way does the social constructivist BALL have an impact on improving EFL students' reading comprehension?*; and the findings from the pre-experimental questionnaire and the post-experimental questionnaire reported in section 4.2 deal

with Research Question 2: *How are students' attitudes towards reading promoted by the implementation of the social constructivist BALL?* This section discusses the results related to the effects of the implementation of the social constructivist blog-assisted language learning (BALL) on a reading class. The discussions begin with a comparison between the pre-experimental and post-experimental reading tests results, and then with a comparison of questionnaire results between the pre-experimental and the post-experimental questionnaires. Figures and examples of these results demonstrate the present research related discussions.

5.1.1 Discussions on the Effectiveness of the Social Constructivist

BALL on Students' Reading Comprehension

The first research purpose of the present study is to find out how the social constructivist BALL can impact on improving EFL students' reading comprehension. The first research question refers to one of the issues, that is, whether the social constructivist BALL could improve EFL students' reading comprehension. According to the previous data analysis in Chapter 4, the results from the pre-experimental reading test and post-experimental reading test scores indicated that there were positive effects of the social constructivist BALL on improving EFL students' reading comprehension. Before the researcher conducted the empirical teaching, the data of students' pre-experimental reading test scores between control group (non-blog class) and experimental group (blog-based class) were collected. As Table 4.1.5 in Chapter 4 mentioned, the mean scores of their pre-experimental reading test scores ($M.t1=31.84$;

M.t2=32.29) and their mean scores of reading proficiency levels (M.p1=1.31; M.p2=1.29) indicated that the two groups' average test scores were not significantly different, and their reading proficiency levels were both in between level 1 and level 2. After the researcher finished the 15-week empirical teaching, the data of students' post-experimental reading test scores between the control group and the experimental group were collected. In Table 4.1.5, the mean scores of their post-experimental reading test scores (M.t1=40.38; M.t2=52.04) and their mean scores of reading proficiency levels (M.p1=1.62; M.p2=2.18) indicated that the two groups' average test scores were significantly different; the control group's reading proficiency level was still in between level 1 and level 2; however, the experimental group's reading proficiency level was in between level 2 and level 3. The results of the data compared above testify that the experimental group students made greater progress than the control group students after the 15-week experiment by utilizing the social constructivist BALL.

Three major reasons below may account for students' improvement on their English reading.

Firstly, the time for students' EFL reading class of the experiment was long enough so that their reading comprehension was improved according to their reading test results. In the previous research studies, Rashtchi and Hajihassani (2010) found that their students' reading comprehension was not promoted by a 5-week reading class. However, Edington (2007) found that her students' reading comprehension was

promoted after her 3-semester study on the teaching of a reading class. Apparently, the 5-week empirical teaching is not enough, and 3-semester experiment is sufficiently enough. In this study, in line with the researcher's blog teaching modules (see Table 2.1, Table 2.2 and Table 2.3 in Chapter 2), students were required to take the 15-week reading class; they learnt reading more than 9 hours each week; and each time for the reading class, they had at least 3 hours to learn a reading text with blog-based class. According to Barbera and Reimann (2014), "time plays a fundamental role in both the benefits and challenges of using online discussions as a pedagogical tool" (p.198); and students should be engaged in an interactive learning time as much as possible. In the present study, based on the modules of social constructivist BALL, time for students' interactive reading class was affluent; thus, data results analyzed from the main study were proven that they are satisfactory. That is, the 15-week teaching by using social constructivist BALL had positive effects on improving EFL students' reading comprehension. If students continue to study by using the reading modules of social constructivist BALL for a longer time, their reading comprehension proficiency level is likely to reach a higher level; and they are more promising to pass the College English Test Band 4 (see CET-4 in 1.2.1 on page 8 in Chapter 1).

Secondly, students' reading and learning environment with the blog-based class might play an important role in improving their reading comprehension. According to Levy (2000) and Chapelle (2001), a computer-assisted language learning (CALL) environment can facilitate EFL learning of reading. Blog-assisted

language learning (BALL), one of CALL tools, was utilized by the researcher in a reading class in this study. Based on social constructivism (as mentioned in 2.1.1.3 on page 31 in Chapter 2), learners do not only accumulate reading schema (prior knowledge) through individual interacting with the contents of reading materials, but also learn schema through social interacting with people including teachers and peers in an engaged and active environment. In a previous study, Rashtchi and Hajihassani (2010) failed to improve their students' reading comprehension in their blog-based environment because they did not provide students any guide or instruction of interactive learning; that is, although they set a CALL environment, they did not create an engaged and active CALL environment for students to interact with each other. In the present study, the blog-based reading class not only provided an environment for learners to read and write, but also actively engaged them in communicating and interacting knowledge with the teacher and peers. In this learning process, the researcher in the present study solved a problem of large class size, which could make the instructor fail to instruct students individually. In a BALL environment, experts (the teacher and higher proficiency level students) participated in communicating with each student on blogs, and also corrected students' mistakes they posted and commented on blogs. Thus, students learnt from the experts interactively and individually. In a traditional reading class, students had seldom chances to share ideas and knowledge with peers. However, in this social constructivist BALL environment, students were actively engaged in this learning

process, and they got plenty of chances to communicate so that they learnt much new knowledge from each other. The more students accumulated schemata, the higher their reading comprehension proficiency level could be (Behjat, 2011). Therefore, the BALL environment may be considered as a factor impacting the data results of the reading tests.

At last, the researcher's teaching concepts including theories, teaching approaches and a teaching environment might be applied properly in the empirical teaching of the present study, so that students' reading comprehension was promoted. In the previous research studies, Edington (2007) successfully improved her students' reading comprehension by using the concepts of social constructivism including the idea of "learning by doing projects with others". Attarzadeh (2011) and Reza and Mahmood (2013) successfully promoted their students' reading comprehension by using the approach of scaffolding based on social constructivism. However, in Rashtchi and Hajihassani's (2010) research study, they failed to improve their students' reading comprehension because they neither proposed any proper theory for supporting their ideas nor provided any specific reading modules or steps for guiding students' interactive learning. Therefore, proper theory, good teaching approach and teaching environment are important elements for a successful reading class. In the present study, two theories of reading based on social constructivism including schema theory and engagement theory were integrated into a teaching concept, which contains the utilization of scaffolding approach and collaborative learning approach

(see 2.1.2.3 on page 47 in Chapter 2). Accordingly, the researcher introduced a social constructivist instructional approach and blog-based modules to a reading class grounded on social constructivism in this study. According to Piaget (1968), learners should construct their own schema in a learner-centered class rather than in a teacher-centered learning environment. Therefore, teachers are not only required to pay attention to the roles of students and themselves, but also to build a proper learning environment for students. This study concerns with a learner-centered blog reading class, which allowed learner-democracy so that students could be engaged in an active learning process by collaborating and interacting with peers and experts, and they could learn from each other (Nunan, 1988; Weimer, 2002). This study also emphasizes the process that students learned and acquired knowledge made them think individually and reflect what they had learnt immediately. In order to make students construct their own schemata as many as possible, they need to be engaged in an active learning process by approaches (Kearsley & Schneiderman, 1998). According to Vygostky (1978), learners can build knowledge in an interactive learning process with people and social mediums. In this study, students were largely involved in interacting with the teacher and peers when they were learning a reading text in a blog-based class based on scaffolding approach and collaborative learning approach. People including the teacher and higher reading proficiency level peers supported and helped students by scaffolding, which largely needs their social interaction and discussion. This study utilized blogs as a social medium to build an

environment that engaged students' learning collaboratively. Blog tools provided many chances for students to communicate with each other, made a reading text easier to be understood, and also made the reading classes authentic and interesting. The BALL modules based on a social constructivist instructional approach in the present study (see 2.1.3.3 on page 60 in Chapter 2) provided an integrated and substantial reading process according to social constructivism for students to learn each reading text orderly. Hence, the test results showed that a social constructivist instructional approach grounded on social constructivist theories with a blog-based environment is one of the most important factors positively impacting students' reading comprehension.

In short, time for teaching, environment for reading and learning, and teaching concepts including theory, teaching approach and teaching environment are considered as the major reasons that the blog-based class made significant improvement on reading comprehension.

The next sub-section will continue discussing the findings from an affective aspect.

5.1.2 Discussions on Students' Attitudes towards Reading

One of the purposes of the present study is to investigate how students' attitudes towards reading are promoted through the utilization of the social constructivist BALL. The Research Question 2 refers to the issues; namely, whether students' attitudes towards reading are promoted through the utilization of the social

constructivist BALL, and what their altered attitudes towards reading are. According to the previous data analyzed in Chapter 4, the results from the pre-experimental questionnaire and the post-experimental questionnaire indicated that the social constructivist BALL had positive effects on improving EFL students' attitudes towards reading.

Before the researcher carried out the empirical teaching, data analyzed from pre-experimental questionnaires showed that all students believed reading could be beneficial to their EFL learning. It means that more and more students' attitudes on beliefs towards reading were positive (see Table in 4.2.1 in Chapter 4). The reason for the positive change may account for that more and more students realized the importance of reading, and their English skills such as listening, speaking, and writing were promoted through learning in the social constructivist BALL environment with peers and experts.

Table 5.1 below refers to students' indecisive attitudes towards reading analyzed from pre-experimental questionnaires. These attitudes indicate that students were not sure about their inclinations and feelings towards reading. Items 8 and 9 show students' inclinations that they did not know whether they like reading more than listening, speaking and writing, and they were not sure whether they wanted to read in English after class. The reason for these indecisive attitudes may be that these English major freshmen did not have enough background in English knowledge at the beginning of learning English reading. Thus, they did not know much about English reading.

Table 5.1 Indecisive Attitudes towards Reading from Students' Pre-Experimental Questionnaires

Attitudes	Questionnaire Contents	G	N	Frequency Percentage (%)		
				Disagree (1 point)	Not Sure (2 point)	Agree (3 point)
Indecisive Attitudes	8. I prefer reading comprehension to other language skills. 比起其他三种语言技能, 我更喜欢阅读理解。	1	55	16.4%	50.9%	32.7%
		2	55	29.1%	34.5%	36.4%
	9. I like to take more reading comprehension courses after this class is finished. 在阅读课堂结束后, 我还想参加阅读课程。	1	55	16.4%	45.5%	38.2%
		2	55	12.7%	49.1%	38.2%
	10. Reading is for learning but not for enjoyment. 英语阅读本身是学习, 不是享受。	1	55	30.9%	43.6%	25.5%
		2	55	21.8%	50.9%	27.3%
	13. Reading excites me. 阅读英语文章让我兴奋。	1	55	20.0%	47.3%	32.7%
		2	55	29.1%	38.2%	32.7%
		2	55	56.4%	21.8%	21.8%
	25. Reading makes me anxious. 英语阅读使我感到很焦虑和紧张。	1	55	23.6%	43.6%	32.7%
		2	55	32.7%	32.7%	34.5%
	27. I do not want to take part in reading class. 我总是不想上英语阅读课。	1	55	25.5%	54.5%	20.0%
		2	55	20.0%	47.3%	32.7%
	28. I am so relaxed in reading class. 在英语阅读课堂上我感到很放松。	1	55	21.8%	49.1%	29.1%
2		55	38.2%	25.5%	36.4%	

G = Groups: 1 = control group 2 = experimental group

Items 10, 13, 25, 27 and 28 in Table 5.1 above also show students' inclinations that they were not sure whether their feelings including enjoyment, excitement, anxiety and relaxation were good when they were reading. The results may account for that students were concerned about the difficulty of a reading text. If a reading text is too difficult, they might not tend to have feelings of enjoyment, excitement, confidence or relaxation. Thus, they were not sure these feelings while reading.

Table 5.2 below includes students' negative attitudes on the feelings towards reading analyzed by the pre-experimental questionnaires. Items 6, 12, 14 and

21 indicate that students felt it always took them too much time if they were required to read a text; they felt that reading was very difficult for them; and they did not usually spend their spare time on reading. One major reason for the results may be attributed to the complexity and the difficulty of reading comprehension. According to Piaget (1968), Langer (1990) and Sellers (2000), reading is a very complex process needing enough prior knowledge, the comprehensive ability and the interaction between readers and texts. As English major freshmen, these English beginners had not accumulated their English knowledge in a certain quantity, and they had been far from training their comprehensive ability and the interactive skill. Therefore, they did not feel very well with English reading.

Table 5.2 Negative Attitudes towards Reading from Students' Pre-Experimental Questionnaires

Attitudes	Questionnaire Contents	G	N	Frequency Percentage (%)		
				Disagree (1 point)	Not Sure (2 point)	Agree (3 point)
Negative Attitudes	6. Reading is time consuming. 阅读英语文章需要我花大量时间。	1	55	16.4%	50.9%	32.7%
		2	55	5.5%	21.8%	72.7%
	12. Reading is a good way to spend spare time. 英语阅读是打发 时间的好办法。	1	55	52.7%	27.3%	20.0%
		2	55	38.2%	29.1%	30.9%
	14. Reading texts are not usually good enough to finish. 我总是看不 完一些英语阅读文章。	1	55	20.0%	18.2%	61.8%
		2	55	5.5%	21.8%	72.7%
	21. I think reading in English is an easy task. 我认为英语阅读对我来说 是件挺简单的事。	1	55	40.0%	40.0%	20.0%
		2	55	56.4%	21.8%	21.8%

G = Groups: 1 = control group 2 = experimental group

After the researcher accomplished the empirical teaching, the data from post-experimental questionnaires of students' attitudes towards reading still indicated that all students believed reading could be beneficial to their EFL learning (see Table

4.2.4 in Chapter 4). Furthermore, these attitudes items referred to beliefs in Table 4.2.4 had more positive change according to the frequency percentages and *p* values of each item between the data of pre-experimental questionnaires and post-experimental questionnaires. The reason that students made the positive change may be that they realized that reading was more important than before through the 15-week empirical teaching and learning.

Table 5.3 below refers to students' indecisive attitudes towards reading analyzed from post-experimental questionnaires. Item 9 indicates that the students in the non-blog class still were not sure whether they wanted to read in English after class, but most of the students from the blog-based class were willing to read in English after class. There is a significant difference between the blog-based class and the non-blog class. The reason of the difference may account for the different ways that the researcher taught these two classes. Students of the blog-based class may feel interested and relaxing in the blogs learning environment, and students from the non-blog class may not feel interested or relaxing in a normal reading environment. Thus, the blog-based class had a tendency to read after class; and the non-blog class had such an indecisive attitude towards English reading after class.

Item 14 in Table 5.3 below shows the blog-based class students' indecisive attitudes towards reading; that is, they did not know whether they could finish reading a text in a certain time. The students from the non-blog class still held the negative attitude that they could not finish reading a text in a certain time. The two groups had

a different attitude towards reading in this point of view. The reason of the difference may also account for the different ways that the researcher taught these two classes; then the blog-based class's reading comprehension was promoted so that they thought they might be more capable of finishing reading a text in a certain time. However, the non-blog class's reading comprehension was not significantly promoted so that they thought they still might not capable of finishing reading a text in a certain time according to the groups' test results analyzed in 5.2.1.

Table 5.3 Indecisive Attitudes towards Reading from Students' Post-Experimental Questionnaires

Attitudes	Questionnaire Contents	G	N	Frequency Percentage (%)		
				Disagree (1 point)	Not Sure (2 point)	Agree (3 point)
Indecisive Attitudes	9. I like to take more reading comprehension courses after this class is finished. 在阅读课堂结束后, 我还想参加阅读课程。	1	55	20.0%	50.9%	29.1%
		2	55	0	10.9%	89.1%
	14. Reading texts are not usually good enough to finish. 我总是看不完一些英语阅读文章。	1	55	12.7%	16.4%	70.9%
		2	55	20.0%	60.0%	20.0%
	21. I think reading in English is an easy task. 我认为英语阅读对我来说是件挺简单的事。	1	55	58.2%	27.3%	14.5%
		2	55	10.9%	65.5%	23.6%

G = Groups: 1 = control group 2 = experimental group

Item 21 in Table 5.3 above shows the blog-based class students' indecisive attitudes towards reading; that is, they were not sure whether reading to them is difficult or not. The students from the non-blog class still held the negative attitude that reading is difficult to them. The two groups had different attitudes on the feelings of difficulty of reading. The reason of this difference may be that the two groups of students had different reading proficiency levels. According to the test results

analyzed and compared in 5.2.1, the blog-based class's reading comprehension was improved more than the non-blog class after the 15-week empirical teaching. The students who have higher reading proficiency level may possess a better feeling to reading. Thus, the social constructivist BALL class made greater progress on students' attitudes towards reading comprehension than a normal traditional class.

Table 5.4 below contains the negative attitudes towards reading from the students of the non-blog class in the post-experimental questionnaires. These negative attitudes towards reading reflect their bad feelings. They still felt that they needed much time while reading; they did not usually spend time on English reading; in addition, they did not feel excited when they were reading. One reason for these bad feelings may account for the traditional reading class, in which these students learnt reading with fewer chances to be actively engaged in interacting with others, and without a sound CALL environment. Therefore, they did not feel well on these points.

Table 5.4 Negative Attitudes towards Reading from Students' Post-Experimental Questionnaires

Attitudes	Questionnaire Contents	G	N	Frequency Percentage (%)		
				Disagree (1 point)	Not Sure (2 point)	Agree (3 point)
Negative Attitudes	6. Reading is time consuming. 阅读英语文章需要我花大量时间。	1	55	29.1%	5.5%	65.5%
		2	55	52.7%	34.5%	12.7%
	12. Reading is a good way to spend spare time. 英语阅读是打发时间的好办法。	1	55	47.3%	32.7%	20.0%
		2	55	0	12.7%	87.3%
	13. Reading excites me. 阅读英语文章让我兴奋。	1	55	41.8%	30.9%	27.3%
		2	55	0	41.8%	58.2%

G = Groups: 1 = control group 2 = experimental group

Next, the discussions focus on the blog-based class students' altered attitudes towards reading before and after the empirical teaching and learning. The reasons that the blog-based class had positive changes on their attitudes towards reading, and the reasons that they failed to promote their attitudes to be positive on some points are explained as follows.

Comparing the data of the blog-based group's positive attitudes from the pre-experimental questionnaires on items 2, 3, 4, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 23, 26 and 29 with the post-experimental questionnaires on the same items, the data in Table 4.2.7, Table 4.2.8, and Table 4.2.9 in Chapter 4 indicated that their attitudes towards reading had significant improvement according to the p values of significant differences. The reason of the improvement might be that students enjoyed reading more than before under the instructions of the social constructivist BALL.

Table 5.5 below summarizes students' altered attitudes from negativity and indecisiveness to be positive. Items 6, 10, 12, 13, 25, 27, and 28 refer to the blog-based class students' attitudes on feelings towards reading. Before the researcher conducted the empirical teaching, students were not very satisfied on the time they spent on a reading text; they were not sure whether they were joyful, excited, relaxing or anxious while reading; they did not know whether they wanted to take more reading class, and they did not usually spend spare time on English reading. Nonetheless, after they finished the reading class based on the social constructivist BALL, students' feelings were changed to be positive. The reason that most students began to feel good on the time for reading may due to their accumulation of reading schema and their

improvement of reading comprehension by the utilization of the social constructivist BALL. Most students began to feel joyful, excited, relaxed and less anxious while reading because they became more confident and they may feel reading was more interesting through the learning in an interactive blog reading environment. The reason that they became to be willing to spend extra time on reading and reading classes may be that they liked the blog reading environment and the interactive learning atmosphere under the instruction of the social constructivist approach.

Table 5.5 Students' Attitudes Altered to Be Positive

Attitudes	Questionnaire Contents	P	N	Frequency Percentage (%)			Mean	Sig.
				Disagree (1 point)	Not Sure (2 point)	Agree (3 point)		
Altered Items (positive)	6. Reading is time consuming. 阅读英语文章需要我花大量时间.	1	55	5.5%	21.8%	72.7%	2.36	0.000
		2	55	52.7%	34.5%	12.7%	1.60	
	8. I prefer reading comprehension to other language skills. 比起其他三种语言技能, 我更喜欢阅读理解.	1	55	29.1%	34.5%	36.4%	2.11	0.000
		2	55	0	38.2%	61.8%	1.38	
	9. I like to take more reading comprehension courses after this class is finished. 在阅读课堂结束后, 我还想参加阅读课程.	1	55	12.7%	49.1%	38.2%	2.09	0.000
		2	55	0	10.9%	89.1%	2.89	
	10. Reading is for learning but not for enjoyment. 英语阅读本身是学习, 不是享受.	1	55	21.8%	50.9%	27.3%	1.78	0.000
		2	55	83.6%	16.4%	0	1.26	
	12. Reading is a good way to spend spare time. 英语阅读是打发时间的好办法.	1	55	38.2%	29.1%	30.9%	1.73	0.000
		2	55	0	12.7%	87.3%	2.87	
	13. Reading excites me. 阅读英语文章让我兴奋.	1	55	29.1%	38.2%	32.7%	1.85	0.000
		2	55	0	41.8%	58.2%	2.58	
	25. Reading makes me anxious. 英语阅读使我感到很焦虑和紧张.	1	55	32.7%	32.7%	34.5%	1.78	0.012
		2	55	52.8%	21.8%	20.0%	1.62	
	27. I do not want to take part in reading class. 我总是想不上英语阅读课.	1	55	20.0%	47.3%	32.7%	1.84	0.012
		2	55	69.1%	16.4%	14.5%	1.45	
28. I am so relaxed in reading class. 在英语阅读课堂上我感到很放松.	1	55	38.2%	25.5%	36.4%	2.07	0.000	
	2	55	12.7%	20.0%	67.3%	2.55		

P = Pre/Post: 1 = pre-questionnaire 2 = post-questionnaire

Items 8 and 9 in Table 5.5 above are these students' inclinations of attitudes towards reading. Most students tended to like reading most among the four English skills, and they intended to take more reading classes after the 15-week empirical teaching based on the social constructivist BALL. The reason may account for the rational utilization of the blog-based reading environment and the instruction of the social constructivist approach. In the previous studies, according to Ward (2004), Pinkman (2005), and Rashtchi and Hajihassani (2010), a blog-based class can largely promote students' attitudes towards reading. Furthermore, Zoghi et al. (2010) in their research study found that a social constructivist approach could also improve students' attitudes towards reading. Therefore, the social constructivist BALL reading class can be beneficial to students' attitudes towards reading.

Table 5.6 Students' Attitudes Altered from Negativity to Indecisiveness

Attitudes	Questionnaire Contents	P	N	Frequency Percentage (%)			Mean	Sig.
				Disagree (1 point)	Not Sure (2 point)	Agree (3 point)		
Altered Items (Indecisive)	14. Reading texts are not usually good enough to finish. 我总是看不完一些英语阅读文章。	1	55	5.5%	21.8%	72.7%	2.55	0.000
		2	55	20.0%	60.0%	20.0%		
	21. I think reading in English is an easy task. 我认为英语阅读对我来说是件挺简单的事。	1	55	56.4%	21.8%	21.8%	1.56	0.001
		2	55	10.9%	65.5%	23.6%		

P = Pre/Post: 1 = pre-questionnaire 2 = post-questionnaire

However, in this research study, not every aspect of attitudes towards reading was altered to be positive by the utilization of the social constructivist BALL. Table 5.6 above summarizes students' indecisive attitudes. Although these attitudes in items 14 and 21 referred to feelings that were promoted from negativity to

indecisiveness, these attitudes were not promoted to be positive. Students were not sure whether they could accomplish reading an English text in a certain time, and they did not know whether a reading text for them was easy or not. These points largely refer to the difficulty of a reading task. The difficulty of a reading text depends on what reading proficiency level a reader has. As 5.1.1 mentioned, students' reading proficiency level was generally improved to be in between level 2 and level 3 (higher than the basic level of CET) after the 15-week empirical teaching. The highest level of reading proficiency is level 4 (advanced level of CET). That is to say, most students in the blog-based class just reached a basic reading proficiency level for passing the CET reading part. Their reading comprehension is still needed to be improved. Therefore, they were not confident enough to have these attitudes towards reading.

To sum up, the blog-based class positively impacted their attitudes towards reading due to learning in the social constructivist BALL environment, which provides an interesting and interactive reading atmosphere. In this class, students' reading comprehension was significantly improved, so their enthusiasm to reading was raised as well. Consequently, in the present study, the blog-based reading class grounded on a social constructivist instructional approach had positive impacts on students' reading comprehension and attitudes towards reading.

The next section discusses students' opinions on the social constructivist BALL by using the data derived from the questionnaires and the blog interviews after the empirical teaching.

5.2 Students' Opinions on the Social Constructivist BALL

The results from the blog interviews reported in section 4.3 deal with Research Question 1: *In what way does the social constructivist BALL have an impact on improving EFL students' reading comprehension?* and Research Question 3: *What are the students' opinions on the social constructivist BALL reading class? How can the BALL help with their EFL reading comprehension in the English reading class?*

This section discusses the findings related to students' opinions on the social constructivist BALL reading class. Triangulated qualitative data collection methods on students' opinions include the questionnaires and the blog interviews. Students' responses are divided into three categories including positive, indecisive and negative opinions. Figures and examples of these results demonstrate the present research related discussions.

5.2.1 Overall Opinions

In general, after the empirical teaching of the present study, the majority of the students favored the blog-based reading class grounded on a social constructivist instructional approach because they were actively engaged in a social interactive reading environment, in which they felt more interested and relaxed, and they learnt more knowledge about reading. According to the data of student questionnaires and interviews, not only did these students have positive opinions on the social constructivist BALL, but also they had some indecisive and even negative opinions.

Table 5.7 below summarizes the categories including students' positive, indecisive and negative opinions. Examples (coding scheme see Appendix VI) of their specific opinions are given in this table.

After the empirical teaching, there were 93.3% students holding positive opinions towards reading from the questionnaires. The data of the questionnaires were merged into 3 points Likert-scale in SPSS program so that the researcher could decide whether students' opinions were positive (3 points), indecisive (2 points) or negative (1 point). The examples that held 3 points with students' positive opinions are listed in Table 5.7 below. From the interviews, 87% students had positive opinions on the social constructivist BALL reading class. Regarding the detailed information from the interview, the explanations of these positive opinions can be elaborated. The elaboration will be discussed in the following sub-section 5.2.2 in detail.

Table 5.7 Summary of Categories of Students' Opinions on the Social Constructivist BALL

Categories	Examples	
Positive Opinions	Student questionnaires (93.3%, N=110)	Student3[I2]: <i>"I like to read in English."</i> Student40[I16]: <i>"Reading is worth spending time."</i>
	Student interviews (87%, N=40)	Student23[+o5]: <i>"Yes, occasionally, because the teacher told us to do our homework let the leader to comment on, so many of our leader will correct the wrong things, the teacher went to check, for our comments, let me realize my mistake, of course also improves reading."</i> Student37[VCU]: <i>"I think the three aspects of reading were improved. My vocabulary was expanded. I start to know more about western culture. My comprehensive ability is gradually deepened, and I know the importance of thinking when I read."</i>
Indecisive Opinions	Student questionnaires (6.7%, N=110)	Student8[I14]: <i>"Reading texts are usually good enough to finish."</i> Student19[I21]: <i>"I think reading in English is easy."</i>
	Student interviews (0%, N=40)	None.
Negative Opinions	Student questionnaires (0%, N=110)	None.
	Student interviews (13%, N=40)	Student6[b]: <i>"I enjoy reading a print book, because my eyes will fatigue when I use computer for a long time. And radiation is not good for health."</i> Student7[-8]: <i>"It's useful for me to learn English, but sometimes I think it waste much time and money because I don't have my own computer. So I have to go to net bars to do the blog reading assignments every time."</i>

As for students' indecisive opinions, 6.7% students were not sure whether their attitudes towards reading were good or not on the questionnaires. It may account for their confidence degrees to their reading proficiency levels. Students were just beginners of the English major, and they have not prepared enough knowledge for

reading. Thus, the feelings occurred are reasonable. In the interviews, students were not provided equivocal questions to answer, so there was no indecisive opinion from the interview data.

As for the students' negative opinions, no data on the questionnaires was found, but the data from the interviews indicated that some of them did not like reading on computer. They did not want to take part in this blog-based class, and they considered this reading class as time and money consuming. The explanations of these negative opinions will be elaborated in the following sub-section 5.2.3 in detail.

5.2.2 Positive Opinions

Figure 5.1 below concludes the percentages of students' positive, indecisive and negative opinions on the utilization of the social constructivist BALL from the questionnaires and the interview. In this figure, 93.3% of the students responded with positive opinions in student questionnaires, and 87% of the students held positive opinions in student interviews. The percentages indicate that the positive opinions were much higher than the indecisive and negative opinions.

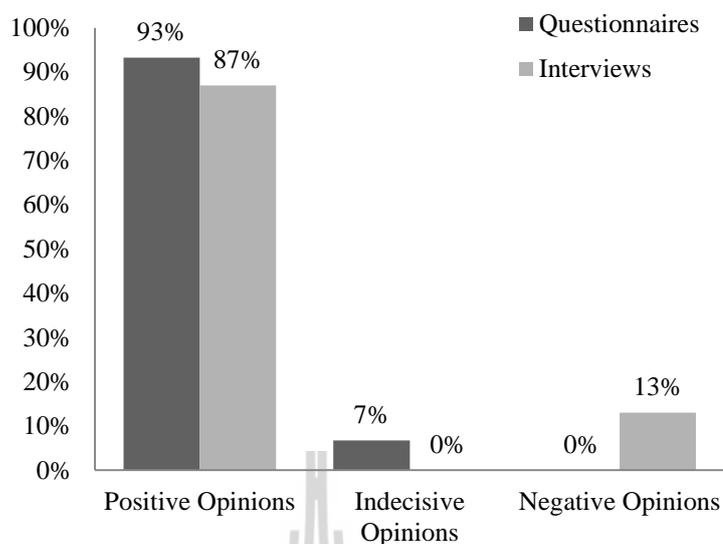


Figure 5.1 Percentages of Students' Opinions from Questionnaires and Interviews

The positive opinions derived from student questionnaires were discussed in 5.1.2. Students believed that reading could be beneficial to their English learning of knowledge and information, other language skills, and comprehensive and critical thinking abilities; they felt better than before when they were reading, and they would like to study reading in their daily life. As 5.1.2 discussed, the reasons for these results may account for their improvement of their reading comprehension through learning with the social constructivist approach and their enjoyment in learning in the social constructivist BALL environment. The approach and environment actively engaged them in a fun, reciprocal and collaborative learning process.

The positive opinions derived from student interviews analyzed in 4.3 were mainly summarized into 6 points, which help this study find the reasons and ways that social constructivist BALL positively impact students' reading comprehension in detail.

Firstly, students thought they liked this blog-based reading class because it provided a modern, technological, convenient, interesting and motivated reading environment for them. As a young generation, these students may not usually refuse new things. A blog-based reading class refers to a BALL environment, in which students were highly attracted and motivated in learning English (Alm, 2009; Carney, 2009; Raith, 2009; Rashtchi & Hajihassani, 2010; Murugaiah et al., 2010; Fageeh, 2011; Bendriss, 2012).

Secondly, students enjoyed the way and the environment that they communicated and interacted with peers and the teacher, because they may learn from each other. They were also encouraged to learn more by the teacher when they exchanged learning points with her. According to engagement theory, if a teacher can engage students in social interaction with others in learning activities, students may be highly facilitated (Kearsley & Schneiderman, 1998; Tracey & Morrow, 2006). Collaborative teams were built among students in this class, and students with different reading proficiency levels were equally assigned. Therefore, they were very active in the learning process.

Thirdly, students thought they absorbed much knowledge about new vocabulary, grammar and culture, and information about current news and some other general knowledge. According to the benefits of BALL mentioned in 2.1.3.2 in Chapter 2 (on page 57), Pinkman and Bortolin (2006), Mynard (2007), Carney (2009), Raith (2009) and Bendriss (2012) respectively stated that students' prior knowledge of

English and English information could be expanded through learning with people and autonomous learning on blogs. Hence, BALL's communicative property and information dissemination function can promote English learning, including reading comprehension.

Fourthly, students were happy to have their own learning space. Most of them felt that every individual played a very important role in a collectivity because they did not only comment and respond on others blogs, but also write their own reflection papers on their own blogs. The process they were writing reflection papers was involved in rethinking and responding to a reading text; that is, students were enhancing the schema they had learnt from a reading text in the cognitive writing process (Granham & Hebert, 2010). Moreover, students had liberty to share feelings and ideas with others. According to cognitive constructivism, if students are learning by doing something, like writing, they can be highly motivated and enthusiastic in the learning process (Bay et al., 2012). Hence, students would like to have their own learning space on blogs.

Fifthly, students felt that their listening, speaking, writing and critical thinking skills were promoted as well as reading. In this learning process of reading, they accumulated schemata for the four language skills and also increased comprehensive and thinking abilities (Hafiz & Tudor, 1989; Barnet & Bedau, 2010). From observation of students' comments and reflection papers on blogs, the researcher found their writing skill became better and better because of using blogs,

and students became more active in expressing ideas and speaking more because they learnt in the interactive social constructivist class.

Finally, they considered blog tools including pictures, videos and comment boards as very important assistants for their reading comprehension, vocabulary accumulation and grammar correction. According to Figure 4.2 in Chapter 4, there are three ways relevant to BALL impacting students' learning of reading. About 54% students affirmed that comments and communications made them learn more knowledge and ideas with each other on blogs; 25% students felt that blog tools of pictures, videos and comment boards helped them understand and memorize target knowledge and information easily; and around 21% students thought that writing reflection papers promoted their application of target knowledge including schema, other language skills and their comprehensive and critical thinking abilities. Owing to the benefits of BALL (see 2.1.3.2 on page 57 in Chapter 2), students' reading comprehension, vocabulary, grammar and cultural knowledge, listening, speaking, writing skills, and comprehensive and critical thinking abilities were improved.

In short, the majority of students endorsed the utilization of the social constructivist BALL.

5.2.3 Negative Opinions

Although Figure 5.1 showed that there is no negative opinion derived from student questionnaires, the indecisive opinions summarized in Table 5.6 should be paid attention to. Students did not know whether they could finish reading an

English text in a certain time; therefore, they were not sure whether reading for them was easy. As discussed below in Table 5.6, these indecisive opinions occurred on account of their confidence degree on their reading proficiency levels. The reading tests result analyzed in section 4.1 and section 5.1 indicated that although their reading proficiency level was promoted, their average level was still in a basic level rather than a higher level. This level may not make me feel confident enough to say that they felt reading was easy or they could finish reading in a short time. Therefore, students still need to continue to improve their reading comprehension.

The negative opinions derived from student interviews that were analyzed in 4.3 mainly were summarized into 3 points, which should be attracted much attention by teachers.

Firstly, most students would like to read on papers rather than on computers because of their different learning styles, which refer to a learner's habitual pattern of acquiring knowledge in learning situations. According to Gülbahar and Alper's (2011) learning styles, students with an individual learning style prefer learning alone; students with a social learning style tend to learn with other people; and students with an visual learning style like learning through reading pictures and watching videos. In this study, the students who preferred to read on papers tended to read alone because they thought they usually took notes and marked important points on paper-based books; thus, their learning style might be individual learning style. The students who preferred to read on computers tended to read actively with peers and the teacher, and

they also liked the blog-based environment in which they could see pictures and watch videos; that is to say, their learning style might be social learning style and visual learning style. Before the researcher conducted the main study, she did not realize some problems would occur on students' different learning styles. Therefore, in the further study, students' learning styles in a CALL learning environment should be considered carefully.

Secondly, some of the students thought that learning in the social constructivist BALL environment was money consuming as well as time consuming. In this study, not only students were required to learn reading in the blog-based multimedia classroom, but they needed to accomplish their tasks on blogs after class. As the modules of the social constructivist BALL mentioned in Table 2.3 in Chapter 2 (on page 70), students had about 70 minutes to do "after reading" tasks including responding to text relevant knowledge on the teacher's blog and writing reflection papers on their own blogs in the *after class* procedure of the BALL modules. In this procedure, if a student had no personal computer, he or she needed to go to a net-bar or a paid computer lab to finish those tasks; thus, they paid much money by themselves for this. In this procedure, if a student had not grasped enough computer techniques to do the blog-based tasks, he or she might spend more than 70 minutes or even more than hours to finish those tasks. Before the researcher conducted the main study, she did not realize some problems would occur on the money and the basic computer techniques of the utilization of BALL. Hence, in the further study, the researcher should think about these points carefully.

Lastly, some students rarely participated in the social constructivist BALL class, so they did not feel any improvement of their reading comprehension. Although the data from the reading tests showed that their reading comprehension was generally promoted, the data could not represent those students' individual reading proficiency levels. From the individuals' test scores between pre-experimental reading test and the post-experimental reading test, some students' reading comprehension indeed was not improved. These students were interviewed, and they reported that they had no time to participate in every procedure of the social constructivist BALL modules because they hated the English major and they would rather spend the after class time on the university's community activities or a part-time job. Many reasons that they hated English may account for that they might be arranged to be one of the English majors by the recruiting system of the educational department, and they might have other talents in other types of multiple intelligences, which may not relate to English language learning, and so on. No matter what reasons caused their rare participation in the social constructivist BALL class, the teachers should find ways to rebuild students' confidence and interests in reading so that the students could whole-heartedly devote themselves to English learning.

In conclusion, most students' opinions on the social constructivist BALL reading class were positive. In spite of this, some students had negative opinions on it. Consequently, researchers should insist on the positive sides of the present study, and find solutions to shifting the negative sides to be positive.

5.3 Summary

This chapter presented the discussions to the main study. The findings were discussed in detail. Then, the explanations for these results were given. In the next chapter, a conclusion of the present study will be presented.



CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

This chapter consists of four sections. The first section summarizes briefly the major findings of the study. The second section gives some pedagogical implications on the basis of the results of this study. The third section describes the limitations of the study. Finally, the fourth section provides some suggestions for further studies to conclude this thesis.

6.1 Summary

The present study was conducted to investigate the impacts of the blog-based reading class grounded on a social constructivist instructional approach (social constructivist BALL) on Chinese EFL (English as a foreign language) students' reading comprehension, and to find out the ways of the social constructivist BALL which can improve students' reading comprehension and their attitudes towards reading by exploring their opinions towards the social constructivist BALL reading class. This study employed a triangulation methodology including theoretical triangulation and methodological triangulation first to interpret theories of constructivism, social constructivist approach, blog, and instructions of reading, and then to analyze the collected data by using quantitative and qualitative methods

respectively before and after the quasi-experiment. The quantitative methods involved pre-experimental reading test and post-experimental reading test, and student pre-experimental questionnaire and post-experimental questionnaire. The qualitative methods involved students' post-experimental blog interviews. After the 15-week experiment (see 3.4.1 in Chapter 3) by utilizing the modules of the social constructivist BALL (mentioned in Table 2.1, Table 2.2 and Table 2.3 in Chapter 2), the data were collected and analyzed by the researcher. The following research questions were examined and explored in the present study.

- 1) In what way does the social constructivist BALL have an impact on improving EFL students' reading comprehension?
- 2) How are students' attitudes towards reading promoted by the implementation of the social constructivist BALL?
- 3) What are the students' opinions on the social constructivist BALL reading class? How can the social constructivist BALL help with their EFL reading comprehension in the English reading class?

In order to help answer Research Question 1, this study employed the quantitative methods involving pre-experimental and post-experimental reading tests to examine whether the social constructivist BALL have any impact on improving students' reading comprehension. In addition, this study also applied the qualitative methods involving students' blog interviews to explore how the social constructivist BALL can promote students' reading comprehension. To answer Research Question 2,

this study employed the quantitative methods involving student pre-experimental questionnaire and post-experimental questionnaire to investigate whether the social constructivist BALL have any impact on students' attitudes towards reading, and to find out how students' attitudes towards reading were altered. For exploring Research Question 3, this study utilized the qualitative methods involving students' blog interviews to study students' opinions on the social constructivist BALL, and to reveal how the social constructivist BALL helped students improve their reading comprehension.

According to the analysis and results of the collected data (see Chapter 4), the summary can be drawn as follows:

Firstly, the social constructivist BALL had positive effects on improving EFL students' reading comprehension. Before the empirical teaching, the data derived from the pre-experimental reading test showed that the mean score of the non-blog group of students' reading test scores was 31.84, and of the blog-based group's was 32.29 ($M.t1=31.84$; $M.t2=32.29$). After the empirical teaching, the data derived from the post-experimental reading test showed that the mean score of the non-blog group of students' reading test scores was 40.38, and of the blog-based group's was 52.04 ($M.t1=40.38$; $M.t2=52.04$). By comparing the mean scores of the pre-experimental reading tests with those of the post-experimental reading tests from the blog-based group, students' average reading comprehension was significantly improved. By comparing the mean scores of the pre-experimental reading test with those of the

post-experimental reading test from the non-blog group, students' reading comprehension was also improved; however, the tests result had little significant difference of the promotion. According to the partition of students' reading comprehension proficiency levels (as mentioned in 4.1.1 in Chapter 4), after the empirical teaching, blog-based group's reading proficiency level was promoted from level 1 to level 2; however, the non-blog group's reading proficiency level remained at level 1. That is to say, the social constructivist BALL reading class positively impacted students' reading comprehension more than a traditional reading class did.

Secondly, students' attitudes towards reading were positively promoted by the implementation of the social constructivist BALL. By analyzing each item of the frequency percentages that students responded to the questionnaires from the pre-experimental questionnaire (see Table 4.2.1, Table 4.2.2, and Table 4.2.3 in Chapter 4), most of them held beliefs that reading could be beneficial to them. However, their feelings were not good while they were reading because of the difficulties of reading texts, and most of them have positive inclinations to continue to learn reading. From the post-experimental questionnaire by analyzing each item of frequency percentages and significant differences (see Table 4.2.4, Table 4.2.5, and Table 4.2.6 in Chapter 4), the blog-based group's attitudes towards reading had significant promotion: more students believed that reading were beneficial to their English study; their feelings got much better about reading, but some of them were not sure about their feelings on the difficulties of reading; and more students tended to

enjoy reading and wanted to continue to learn reading. However, the non-blog group students' attitudes towards reading were not significantly promoted by analyzing each item of this questionnaire. Therefore, the social constructivist BALL reading class positively impacted students' attitudes towards reading more than a traditional reading class did. After the experiment, the blog-based group students altered their attitudes towards reading from neutral to positive, from negative to positive, and from negative to neutral (see Table 4.2.10 in Chapter 4). They began to enjoy reading classes, they felt better when they were reading, and they intended to take spare time on English reading. However, they were not sure whether reading was still difficult to them or not, and they were also not sure whether they could finish reading a text in a short time.

At last, after the empirical teaching, the data derived from the blog interview indicated that 87% students upheld the social constructivist BALL class, and 13% students had some disapproved opinions on this class. Those students who approved it enjoyed the learning environment because they considered it as a modern, technological, convenient, interesting and motivated reading environment; they felt that the peer and teacher collaboration and scaffolding were very useful and helpful for learning with each other; they thought their knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, and culture was improved by it; they were fond of having individual learning spaces in their own blogs; they thought their English skills of writing, speaking, listening, and critical thinking were promoted; and they regarded the blog tools including pictures, videos, and comment boards as useful techniques to help them understand

and memorize more about a reading text. Students who disapproved of the social constructivist BALL class thought that they would rather read on papers than on computers; they thought it was time and money consuming; and they did not participate in activities of the class and they did not think it could improve their reading.

The interview data also revealed that there are mainly three ways impacting and helping with students' reading comprehension via learning in the social constructivist BALL environment: 1) comments and communications made students learn more knowledge and ideas with each other; 2) blog tools including pictures, videos and comment boards expanded students' knowledge and thoughts; and 3) reflection papers promoted their application of target knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, writing, speaking, and their critical thinking.

To sum up, according to the data analysis and discussions, the social constructivist BALL had positive impacts on students' reading comprehension and their attitudes towards reading. Although some students had indecisive and negative opinions on the social constructivist BALL class, the majority of them upheld its implementation of this class.

6.2 Pedagogical Implications

This study investigates the implementation of the social constructivist BALL on Chinese EFL students' reading comprehension. From the research results and the discussions of the present study, the pedagogical implications are concluded as follows:

1) In China's EFL classes, learners need more interactions with the teacher and peers so that they can learn more knowledge and information with each other. The present study provided an interactive learning approach, which refers to a social constructivist instructional approach grounded on schema theory and engagement theory including scaffolding and collaborative learning respectively. Activities and tasks based on scaffolding and collaborative learning offered more opportunities of social interaction to students (see the social constructivist BALL reading modules from page 67 to 70). The findings of this study imply that this interactive learning approach facilitated EFL reading on expanding students' knowledge and information of reading contents, and improving their other language skills, e.g. speaking, writing, listening and critical thinking. Students also expressed their enthusiasm on learning with other people, and their English proficiency level can be promoted by this learning atmosphere. Therefore, teachers should give students more chances to communicate and interact with each other in classes.

2) EFL teachers need to create student-centered classes rather than teacher-centered classes. The instructions based on social constructivism in this

study differentiate the roles between the teacher and students in classes. A teacher had been no longer considered as the main speaker in classrooms. In the present study, students played the major roles involving independent thinkers, designers, authors, and investigators to take part in reading activities and tasks, and the teacher was a guide, a facilitator and a co-explorer to supervise students' active participation with guidelines, and to give correct or standard answers and opinions (see the social constructivist BALL reading modules from page 67 to 70). Students enjoyed the feelings that every individual played an important role in classes because the teacher concerned about each of them while they were doing tasks, and they also had more autonomy to express their own ideas and accomplish their own works. Thus, students need to concern about the roles they play in EFL classrooms.

3) EFL teachers need to construct sound CALL environments in order to engage student in an interactive and active learning process. In this study, the researcher created a blog-based reading environment to inspire students' interests and motivate them to actively learn together. Blogs furnished pictures, videos and comment boards to students so that they could expand their schema and understand a reading content easier (see the teacher's blog in Appendix V). Blogs provided individual learning space to each student so that he or she could express feelings or share ideas on a blog (see a student's blog in Appendix V). Blogs also offered opportunities of social interaction to students so that they could be engaged in an active learning process. Blogs, as one of CALL tools in this study, were beneficial to

the application of the social constructivist instructional approach, and promoted students' EFL reading. The research results indicate that this social constructivist BALL positively impacted on students' EFL reading comprehension and attitudes towards reading. Hence, language learning environments based on CALL should be paid much attention by EFL teachers and students.

6.3 Limitations of the Study

In the present study, the triangulation methodology of the data collection including tests, questionnaires and interviews was used by the researcher. The findings from analyzed data facilitate the understanding of the study of the effectiveness of the social constructivist BALL on Chinese EFL students' reading comprehension. However, although this study had some pedagogical implications about implementing the social constructivist BALL in students' reading class, some limitations are existed.

1) Limitations of the range of participated population including universities, majors, genders and levels of English proficiency. In the present study, the participants were selected from the first year English major undergraduates at Kaili University (KU), Guizhou province, China. If the investigation had not been conducted with the participants who were only chosen by convenience and availability, the research results of the study would have had a broader scope to conclude.

2) Limitations of CALL facilities on campus, including computers and Wi-Fi. CALL facilities at KU were deficient because there was neither any computer room for free nor free campus Wi-Fi. If these facilities could have been equipped, students might have enjoyed this learning environment more; then, this study would have had better results of their reading tests, and of attitudes and opinions towards the social constructivist BALL reading class.

3) A limitation on the awareness of learners' learning styles in online instruction. Different students may have different learning styles, especially for online instructions. If the researcher had realized this point before conducting the present study and found solutions to conquering some students' problems in online learning because of different learning styles, students would have participated more actively in the present study, and the research results might have been better.

6.4 Suggestions for Further Studies

According to the limitations discussed above, some research studies on the implementation of the social constructivist BALL can be conducted and explored in college EFL reading classes in further studies. Therefore, the researcher offers some suggestions as follows:

1) Selecting a wider range of participated population. The present study was a preliminary attempt to improve EFL learner's reading comprehension by utilizing the social constructivist BALL in a reading class from the first year English majors at KU. A wider range of subjects that may add more universities and

non-English majors, and select averaged genders and English proficiency levels could be considered to get more informative data and fairer results for further studies.

2) Choosing convenient CALL environments suitable for research studies. This study was a new attempt to utilize blogs, one of CALL tools, in an EFL reading class; however, the blog environments for students at KU were not convenient because of the deficiency of CALL facilities. Therefore, a question of how to choose a convenient CALL environment should be taken into consideration first by researchers in further studies. Before the researchers conduct studies, they would better observe and learn whether a CALL environment is convenient and suitable for their studies so that they can maximize the potential use of the CALL environment.

3) Understanding learners' learning styles. This study also focused on an individual's affective aspect including attitudes; however, learner's learning styles in online instruction were not stressed. The research results and discussions from students' opinions suggested that teachers should understand learners' learning styles, which could affect the quality of learning. In further studies, teachers and researchers need to find out learners' learning styles before conducting a research study in order to avoid some influences from students' affective and psychological aspects.

In conclusion, research studies on the utilization of the social constructivist BALL in EFL learners' reading classes are worthy of conducting. It is the researcher's hope that the study could make significant contributions to the studies in the field of EFL reading comprehension.

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APPENDIX I

An Example of a Real Reading Test of CET Band-4

The Part of Reading Comprehension (40 minutes)

Section A

Directions: *In this section, there is a passage with ten blanks. You are required to select one word for each blank from a list of choices given in a word bank following the passage. Read the passage through carefully before making your choices. Each choice in the bank is identified by a letter. Please write your choices for each item on the right side of the box. You may not use any of the words in the blank more than once.*

Questions 1 to 10 are based on the following passage. (1至10小题需阅读下文完成。)

One in six. Believe it or not, that's the number of Americans who struggle with hunger. To make tomorrow a little better, Feeding America, the nation's largest 1 hunger-relief organization, has chosen September as Hunger Action Month. As part of its 30 Ways in 30 Days program, it's asking 2 across the country to help the more than 200 food banks and 61,000 agencies in its network provide low-income individuals and families with the fuel they need to 3.

It's the kind of work that's done every day at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in San Antonio. People who 4 at its front door on the first and third Thursdays of each month aren't looking for God – they're there for something to eat. St. Andrew's runs a *food pantry* (食品室) that 5 the city and several of the 6 towns. Janet Drane is its manager.

In the wake of the 7, the number of families in need of food assistance began to grow. It is 8 that 49 million Americans are unsure of where they will find their next meal. What's most surprising is that 36% of them live in 9 where at least one adult is working. "It used to be that one job was all you needed," says St. Andrew's Drane. "The people we see now have three or four part-time jobs and they're still right on the edge 10."

Please give your answers on the blanks of right side.

(此部分试题请在旁边作答。)

- | | |
|----------------|----------------|
| A) accumulate | I) households |
| B) circling | J) recession |
| C) communities | K) reported |
| D) competition | L) reviewed |
| E) domestic | M) serves |
| F) financially | N) surrounding |
| G) formally | O) survive |
| H) gather | |

Please give your answers on the blanks

below : (请将你的选择填在下面横线上:)

- | | |
|---------|----------|
| 1)_____ | 2)_____ |
| 3)_____ | 4)_____ |
| 5)_____ | 6)_____ |
| 7)_____ | 8)_____ |
| 9)_____ | 10)_____ |

Section B

Directions: *In this section, you are going to read a passage with ten statements attached to it. Each statement contains information given in one of the paragraphs. Identify the paragraph from which the information is derived. You may choose a paragraph more than once. Each paragraph is marked with a letter. Please write your choices for each item on the brackets of each item.*

Universities Branch Out

A)

As never before in their long history, universities have become instruments of national competition as well as instruments of peace. They are the place of the scientific discoveries that move economies forward, and the primary means of educating the talent required to obtain and maintain competitive advantage. But at the same time, the opening of national borders to the flow of goods, services, information and especially people has made universities a powerful force for global integration, mutual understanding and geopolitical stability.

B)

In response to the same forces that have driven the world economy, universities have become more self-consciously global: seeking students from around the world who represent the entire range of cultures and values, sending their own students abroad to prepare them for global careers, offering courses of study that address the challenges of an interconnected world and *collaborative* (合作的) research programs to advance science for the benefit of all humanity.

C)

Of the forces shaping higher education none is more sweeping than the movement across borders. Over the past three decades the number of students leaving home each year to study abroad has grown at an annual rate of 3.9 percent, from 800,000 in 1975 to 2.5 million in 2004. Most travel from one developed nation to another, but the flow from developing to developed countries is growing rapidly. The reverse flow, from developed to developing countries, is on the rise, too. Today foreign students earn 30 percent of the doctoral degrees awarded in the United States and 38 percent of those in the United Kingdom. And the number crossing borders for undergraduate study is growing as well, to 8 percent of the undergraduates at America's best institutions and 10 percent of all undergraduates in the U.K. In the United States, 20 percent of the newly hired professors in science and engineering are foreign-born, and in China many newly hired faculty members at the top research universities received their graduate education abroad.

D)

Universities are also encouraging students to spend some of their undergraduate years in another country. In Europe, more than 140,000 students participate in the Erasmus program each year, taking courses for credit in one of 2,200 participating institutions across the continent. And in the United States, institutions are helping place students in summer *internships* (实习) abroad to prepare them for global careers. Yale and Harvard

have led the way, offering every undergraduate at least one international study or internship opportunity—and providing the financial resources to make it possible.

E)

Globalization is also reshaping the way research is done. One new trend involves sourcing portions of a research program to another country. Yale professor and Howard Hughes Medical Institute investigator Tian Xu directs a research center focused on the genetics of human disease at Shanghai's Fudan University, in collaboration with faculty colleagues from both schools. The Shanghai center has 95 employees and graduate students working in a 4,300-square-meter laboratory facility. Yale faculty, postdoctors and graduate students visit regularly and attend videoconference seminars with scientists from both campuses. The arrangement benefits both countries; Xu's Yale lab is more productive, thanks to the lower costs of conducting research in China, and Chinese graduate students, postdoctors and faculty get on-the-job training from a world-class scientist and his U.S. team.

F)

As a result of its strength in science, the United States has consistently led the world in the commercialization of major new technologies, from the mainframe computer and the integrated circuit of the 1960s to the Internet *infrastructure* (基础设施) and applications software of the 1990s. The link between university-based science and industrial application is often indirect but sometimes highly visible: Silicon Valley was intentionally created by Stanford University, and Route 128 outside Boston has long housed companies spun off from MIT and Harvard. Around the world, governments have encouraged copying of this model, perhaps most successfully in Cambridge, England, where Microsoft and scores of other leading software and biotechnology companies have set up shop around the university.

G)

For all its success, the United States remains deeply hesitant about sustaining the research-university model. Most politicians recognize the link between investment in science and national economic strength, but support for research funding has been unsteady. The budget of the National Institutes of Health doubled between 1998 and 2003, but has risen more slowly than inflation since then. Support for the physical sciences and engineering barely kept pace with inflation during that same period. The attempt to make up lost ground is welcome, but the nation would be better served by steady, predictable increases in science funding at the rate of long-term GDP growth, which is on the order of inflation plus 3 percent per year.

H)

American politicians have great difficulty recognizing that admitting more foreign students can greatly promote the national interest by increasing international understanding. Adjusted for inflation, public funding for international exchanges and foreign-language study is well below the levels of 40 years ago. In the wake of September 11, changes in the visa process caused a dramatic decline in the number of foreign students seeking admission to U.S. universities, and a corresponding surge in enrollments

in Australia, Singapore and the U.K. Objections from American university and business leaders led to improvements in the process and a reversal of the decline, but the United States is still seen by many as unwelcoming to international students.

D)

Most Americans recognize that universities contribute to the nation's well-being through their scientific research, but many fear that foreign students threaten American competitiveness by taking their knowledge and skills back home. They fail to grasp that welcoming foreign students to the United States has two important positive effects: first, the very best of them stay in the States and—like immigrants throughout history—strengthen the nation; and second, foreign students who study in the United States become ambassadors for many of its most *cherished* (珍视) values when they return home. Or at least they understand them better. In America as elsewhere, few instruments of foreign policy are as effective in promoting peace and stability as welcoming international university students.

Please give your answers in the brackets below. (请将你的选择答案填在下面括号内。)

- () 11. American universities prepare their undergraduates for global careers by giving them chances for international study or internship.
- () 12. Since the mid-1970s, the enrollment of overseas students has increased at an annual rate of 3.9 percent.
- () 13. The enrollment of international students will have a positive impact on America rather than threaten its competitiveness.
- () 14. The way research is carried out in universities has changed as a result of globalization.
- () 15. Of the newly hired professors in science and engineering in the United States, twenty percent come from foreign countries.
- () 16. The number of foreign students applying to U.S. universities decreased sharply after September 11 due to changes in the visa process.
- () 17. The U.S. federal funding for research has been unsteady for years.
- () 18. Around the world, governments encourage the model of linking university-based science and industrial application.
- () 19. Present-day universities have become a powerful force for global integration.
- () 20. When foreign students leave America, they will bring American values back to their home countries.

Section C

Directions: *There are 2 passages in this section. Each passage is followed by some questions or unfinished statements. For each of them there are four choices marked A), B), C) and D). You should decide on the best choice and write your choices for each item on the brackets of each item.*

Passage One

Questions 21 to 25 are based on the following passage. (21 至 25 小题需阅读下文完成。)

Heat-related health problems, but even before its release, the report drew criticism from some experts on climate and risk, who questioned its methods and conclusions.

Along with the deaths, the report said that the lives of 325 million people, primarily in poor countries, were being seriously affected by climate change. It projected that the number would double by 2030.

Roger Pielke Jr., a political scientist at the University of Colorado, Boulder, who studies disaster trends, said the Forum's report was "a methodological embarrassment" because there was no way to distinguish deaths or economic losses related to human-driven global warming amid the much larger losses resulting from the growth in populations and economic development in *vulnerable* (易受伤害的) regions. Dr. Pielke said that "climate change is an important problem requiring our utmost attention." But the report, he said, "will harm the cause for action on both climate change and disasters because it is so deeply *flawed* (有瑕疵的)."

However, Soren Andreasen, a social scientist at Dalberg Global Development Partners who supervised the writing of the report, defended it, saying that it was clear that the numbers were rough estimates. He said the report was aimed at world leaders, who will meet in Copenhagen in December to negotiate a new international climate treaty.

In a press release describing the report, Mr. Annan stressed the need for the negotiations to focus on increasing the flow of money from rich to poor regions to help reduce their vulnerability to climate hazards while still curbing the emissions of the heat-trapping gases. More than 90% of the human and economic losses from climate change are occurring in poor countries, according to the report.

Please give your answers in the brackets below. (请将你的选择答案填在下面括号内。)

- () 21. What is the finding of the Global Humanitarian Forum?
 A) Rates of death from illnesses have risen due to global warming.
 B) Global temperatures affect the rate of economic development.
 C) Malnutrition has caused serious health problems in poor countries.
 D) Economic trends have to do with population and natural disasters.
- () 22. What do we learn about the Forum's report from the passage?
 A) It caused a big stir in developing countries.
 B) It was warmly received by environmentalists.
 C) It aroused a lot of interest in the scientific circles.
 D) It was challenged by some climate and risk experts.
- () 23. What does Dr. Pielke say about the Forum's report?
 A) Its statistics look embarrassing.
 B) It deserves our closest attention.
 C) It is invalid in terms of methodology.
 D) Its conclusion is purposely exaggerated.

- () 24. What is Soren Andreasen's view of the report?
- A) Its conclusions are based on carefully collected data.
 B) It is vulnerable to criticism if the statistics are closely examined.
 C) It will give rise to heated discussions at the Copenhagen conference.
 D) Its rough estimates are meant to draw the attention of world leaders.
- () 25. What does Kofi Annan say should be the focus of the Copenhagen conference?
- A) How human and economic losses from climate change can be reduced.
 B) How rich countries can better help poor regions reduce climate hazards.
 C) How emissions of heat-trapping gases can be reduced on a global scale.
 D) How rich and poor regions can share responsibility in curbing global warming.

Passage Two

Questions 26 to 30 are based on the following passage. (26至30小题需阅读下文完成。)

It's an annual argument. Do we or do we not go on holiday? My partner says no because the boiler could go, or the roof fall off, and we have no savings to save us. I say you only live once and we work hard and what's the point if you can't go on holiday. The joy of a recession means no argument next year – we just won't go.

Since money is known to be one of the things most likely to bring a relationship to its knees, we should be grateful. For many families the recession means more than not booking a holiday. A YouGov poll of 2,000 people found 22% said they were arguing more with their partners because of concerns about money. What's less clear is whether divorce and separation rates rise in a recession – financial pressures mean couples argue more but make splitting up less affordable. A recent research shows arguments about money were especially damaging to couples. Disputes were characterised by intense *verbal* (言语上的) aggression, tended to be repeated and not resolved, and made men, more than women, extremely angry.

Kim Stephenson, an occupational psychologist, believes money is such a big deal because of what it symbolises, which may be different things to men and women. "People can say the same things about money but have different ideas of what it's for," he explains. "They'll say it's to save, to spend, for security, for freedom, to show someone you love them." He says men are more likely to see money as a way of buying status and of showing their parents that they've achieved something.

"The biggest problem is that couples assume each other knows what's going on with their finances, but they don't. There seems to be more of a *taboo* (禁忌) about talking about money than about death. But you both need to know what you're doing, who's paying what into the joint account and how much you keep separately. In a healthy relationship, you don't have to agree about money, but you have to talk about it."

Please give your answers in the brackets below. (请将你的选择答案填在下面括号内。)

- () 26. What does the author say about vacationing?
A) People enjoy it all the more during a recession.
B) Few people can afford it without working hard.
C) It is the chief cause of family disputes.
D) It makes all the hard work worthwhile.
- () 27. What does the author mean by saying “money is known ... to bring a relationship to its knees” (Lines 1-2, Para. 2)?
A) Money is considered to be the root of all evils.
B) Disputes over money may ruin a relationship.
C) Few people can resist the temptation of money.
D) Some people sacrifice their dignity for money.
- () 28. The YouGov poll of 2,000 people indicates that in a recession _____.
A) couples show more concern for each other
B) it is more expensive for couples to split up
C) conflicts between couples tend to rise
D) divorce and separation rates increase
- () 29. What does Kim Stephenson believe?
A) Men and women view money in different ways.
B) Money is often a symbol of a person’s status.
C) Men and women spend money on different things.
D) Money means a great deal to both men and women.
- () 30. The author suggests at the end of the passage that couples should _____.
A) put their money together instead of keeping it separately
B) discuss money matters to maintain a healthy relationship
C) make efforts to reach agreement on their family budgets
D) avoid arguing about money matters to remain romantic

* *The contents of the test were selected and adapted from the China’s real CET (College English Test) band-4 in 2013.*

APPENDIX II

Student Questionnaire of Attitude towards Reading (English Version)

Part 1 Personal Information

Directions: Please fill in the blanks, and tick “√” in “□” as your best choice based on your own background.

1. Gender: male female
2. Age: _____
3. Do you have personal computer:
 Yes No
4. Do you usually use computer to study English?
 Never hardly ever sometimes almost always always
5. Do you believe blog-based reading can improve your reading ability?
 Yes No
6. Do you want your English teacher to use QQ blog to teach reading in your reading class?
 Yes No

Part 2 Attitudes towards Reading

Directions: The questionnaire of attitudes towards reading is designed to gather information about your opinions on reading. Please reading each statement carefully and click (√) on (1) . (2) . (3) . (4) . (5) as your best choice for each item. The number from (1) to (5) stand for the following responses:

Strongly **Disagree** (1);
Disagree (2);
 Not sure (3);
 Agree (4);
 Strongly **Agree** (5).

*For each item, you can only have only one choice.

Items	Content	Please tick ✓				
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1	Reading in English is fun.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
2	I like to read in English.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
3	Reading English is boring.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
4	Time assigned for reading classes is very short.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
5	Reading in English is a waste of time.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
6	Reading is time consuming.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
7	I consider reading as everyday life activity.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
8	I prefer reading comprehension to other language skills.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
9	I like to take more reading comprehension courses after this class is finished.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
10	Reading is for learning but not for enjoyment.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
11	There is nothing to be gained from reading texts.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
12	Reading is a good way to spend spare time.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
13	Reading excites me.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
14	Reading texts are not usually good enough to finish.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
15	Reading is rewarding to me.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
16	Reading is worth spending time.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
17	There should be more time for free reading during the class.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
18	Reading helps me to increase my vocabulary.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
19	Reading helps me improve other language skills.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
20	I can improve my knowledge about grammar by reading.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
21	I think reading in English is an easy task.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
22	I want to improve my reading strategies	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
23	Reading increases my critical thinking.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
24	Reading is not important in our daily life.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
25	Reading makes me anxious.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
26	Reading helps us to become familiar with other cultures.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
27	I do not want to take part in reading class.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
28	I am so relaxed in reading class.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
29	Reading is one of the important skills that everybody should learn.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

😊😊😊 Thank you for your cooperation and help! 😊😊😊

**The questionnaire is adapted from Rashtchi & Hajihassani (2010). Content validity check (see Appendix IV) for the items of the questionnaire had indicated that the item 7 and 27 is invalid; thus, the researcher modified them into above.*

Student Questionnaire of Attitude towards Reading

(Chinese Version)

学生对阅读的态度调查问卷

Part 1 个人信息部分

Directions: 根据你个人的真实情况，请在下面的“□”内打上“√”

1. 性别: 男 女
2. 年龄: _____
3. 是否有个人电脑:
 - a) 有 无
4. 你经常用电脑学英语吗?
 - a) 从没 几乎没有 有过 偶尔 经常
5. 你相信以英语博客为平台的阅读课堂能提高你的阅读能力吗?
 - a) 相信 不相信
6. 你希望你的英语老师利用 QQ 空间开展英语阅读教学吗?
 - a) 希望 不希望

Part 2 对待阅读的态度问题部分

Directions: 接下来是一份对待阅读态度问题的问卷，该问卷是用于调查你对阅

读的态度和想法。请认真阅读以下题项，并在符合你想法的地方打“√”。其中 (1).

(2). (3). (4). (5) 分别代表你的回答，并且他们分别代表(请翻到另一页):

- 非常不同意 (1);
- 不同意 (2);
- 不确定 (3);
- 同意 (4);
- 很同意 (5).

*注意：每个题项只能有一个选择

题项	内容	请打√				
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1	我觉得英语阅读挺有趣。	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
2	我喜欢阅读英语文章。	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
3	英语阅读真无聊。	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
4	课堂上，英语阅读时间总是很短。	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
5	英语阅读真是浪费时间。	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
6	阅读英语文章需要我花大量时间。	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
7	我把英语阅读看成是我们生活中每天要做的事。	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
8	比起其他三种语言技能，我更喜欢阅读理解。	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
9	在阅读课堂结束后，我还想参加阅读课程。	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
10	英语阅读本身是学习，不是享受。	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
11	从英语文章里我什么都没学到。	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
12	英语阅读是打发时间的好办法。	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
13	阅读英语文章让我兴奋。	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
14	我总是看不完一些英语阅读文章。	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
15	英语阅读使我从中获益。	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
16	花时间在英语阅读上是很值得的。	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
17	在课堂上，我们应该有更多自由阅读时间。	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
18	英语阅读能帮我积累更多词汇量。	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
19	阅读能帮我提高其他语言技能，例如：口语和写作。	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
20	英语阅读能帮我提高语法知识。	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
21	我认为英语阅读对我来说是件挺简单的事。	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
22	我想要提高自己的英语阅读策略	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
23	阅读能提高我的批判性思维能力。	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
24	在日常生活中英语阅读并不重要。	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
25	英语阅读使我感到很焦虑和紧张。	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
26	英语阅读帮助我了解其他国家的文化。	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
27	我总是不想上英语阅读课。	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
28	在英语阅读课堂上我感到很放松。	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
29	英语阅读是一个每一个人都应该学的重要技能。	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

😊😊😊 非常感谢你的合作! 😊😊😊

APPENDIX III

Interview Questions (English Version)

1. Do you think reading is important to English learning? Why?
2. Do you usually read English newspapers, books or articles? Why?
3. Have you ever used any blog to implement your English reading? What are those reading articles talking about?
4. Do you prefer to read on paper or on computer? Why?
5. What do you think about a blog-based English reading class?
6. Do you believe your English reading could be promoted by the aids of blogs? Why?
7. What tools of a blog do you think are very useful for understanding a reading text, e.g. pictures, videos or other people's comments on blogs?
8. Are you willing to exchange feeling or ideas about a reading article by using blogs?
9. Do you learn more texts' relevant information or knowledge by commenting or responding from your teacher or your classmates on blogs?
10. After the blog-based class, do you think writing a reflection paper is good for your deep understanding to a reading text? Why?
11. What aspect of reading does a blog-based reading class make you improve a lot, e.g. vocabulary, culture background or your comprehension to reading articles?

**The questionnaire is adapted from the results of students' questionnaire (see Appendix II) in the pilot study. Content validity check (see Appendix IV) for the items of the interview questions had indicated that the item 2 and 10 is invalid; thus, the researcher modified them into above.*

Interview Questions (Chinese Version)

1. 你认为阅读对于英语学习是重要的吗？为什么？
2. 你经常阅读英语报纸，英语书或者其他一些英语文章吗？为什么？
3. 你有用过一些英语博客来进行阅读吗？你喜欢的都是些什么类型的文章呢？
4. 你喜欢通过书本来阅读还是喜欢用电脑来阅读？为什么？
5. 你觉得一个以英语博客为平台的阅读课堂怎么样？
6. 你相信通过英语博客阅读课堂能提高你的阅读水平吗？为什么？
7. 你认为博客的一些工具，例如，图片，视频，还有别人的评论，能否对你理解文章有用？
8. 你是否愿意和别人通过博客来交流自己的对英语文章的理解和表达自己的想法。
9. 你是否通过你的同学或老师在博客上给你的评论或留言学到更多跟阅读文章有关的信息和知识？
10. 在学习了以博客为基础的阅读课堂后，你认为写读后感是否对你深层次地理解文章有好处？为什么？
11. 你认为通过英语博客课堂的学习，你英语阅读的什么方面得到了提高，比如说，词汇，文化背景，还是你对文章的理解能力？

APPENDIX IV

Content Validity Check of the Items of the Questionnaire and the Semi-Structured Interview Questions

1. Form for Checking the Items of the Questionnaire:

No.	Expert No. 1	Expert No. 2	Result
1.....	1	1	√
2.....	1	1	√
3.....	1	1	√
4.....	1	1	√
5.....	1	1	√
6.....	1	1	√
7.....	0	0	×
8.....	1	1	√
9.....	1	1	√
10.....	1	1	√
11.....	1	1	√
12.....	1	1	√
13.....	1	1	√
14.....	1	1	√
15.....	1	1	√
16.....	1	1	√
17.....	1	1	√
18.....	1	1	√
19.....	1	1	√
20.....	1	1	√
21.....	1	1	√
22.....	1	1	√
23.....	1	1	√
24.....	1	1	√
25.....	1	1	√
26.....	1	1	√
27.....	-1	0	×
28.....	1	1	√
29.....	1	1	√
Total	26	27	

- * Notes: “ 1” for the item is congruence with objective
 “-1” for the item is not congruence with objective
 “0” for the expert not sure

* Result of IOC:

$$(IOC = \Sigma R/ N)$$

Item number: 29

$R=26+27=53$ (Scores from experts)

$N=2$ (Numbers of experts)

$IOC=53/2=26.5$

Percentage: $26.5/29=0.914 > 0.5 = \text{valid}$

2. Form for Checking the Semi-Structured Interview Questions:

No.	Expert No. 1	Expert No. 2	Result
1.....	1	1	√
2.....	-1	0	×
3.....	1	1	√
4.....	1	1	√
5.....	1	1	√
6.....	1	1	√
7.....	1	1	√
8.....	1	1	√
9.....	1	1	√
10.....	0	0	×
11.....	1	1	√
Total	8	9	

- * Notes: “ 1” for the item is congruence with objective
 “-1” for the item is not congruence with objective
 “0” for the expert not sure

* Result of IOC:

$$(IOC = \Sigma R/ N)$$

Item number: 11

$R=8+9=17$ (Scores from experts)

$N=2$ (Numbers of expert)

$IOC=17/2=8.5$

Percentage: $8.5/11=0.773 > 0.5 = \text{valid}$

APPENDIX V

An Example of the Teacher's Blog and a Student's Blog

Part 1. The Teacher's Blog

QQ空间 个人中心 我的主页 ▾ 应用 ▾ 装扮 ▾ 搜影视/音乐/应用 🔍 Ms.Jenny [退出] ⚙️ ✉️ 🌸 💛 频

Jenny's Social English Blog 🎉 🍎 + 我要环游全世界!~
http://1220280681.qzone.qq.com

Home Post ETV Vote Photo File Me 更多 Chat

日志 返回日志列表

Unit 1 My First Job

👍 赞 🔄 转载 🌐 分享 ▾ 💬 评论(2) 📄 复制地址 ✎ 编辑 ▾ 上一篇 | 下一篇: Be Well Aware of...

Please watch the following videos and think about what should not be done in an interview of finding a job:

snagajob.com™
THE #1 SOURCE FOR HOURLY EMPLOYMENT

00:00/00:00 🔊 ⚙️ 🗑️ 📺 腾讯视频

snagajob.com™
THE #1 SOURCE FOR HOURLY EMPLOYMENT

00:00/00:00 🔊 ⚙️ 🗑️ 📺 腾讯视频

(Above posted are the text relevant videos, which need students' thinking and discussion)

Reading Part: Discuss

1. Do you like to take shoe-shining as your job? Why and why not?
2. Should children get paid for what they have done to help the family? Why and why not?
3. Which of the following qualities does one need in order to do a good job? Tick your choice from the following list:

intelligence	ability	loyalty	devotion
creativity	hard-working	team-spirit	

Now, read the following story. When you finish the reading, return to question 3. What does the narrator think is the most important quality one needs to do a good job?

My parents ran the Pagonis Restaurant, a small eatery in Charleroi, Pa. The Pagonis was open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and my first real job, when I was six years old, was shining diners' shoes. My father had done it when he was young, so he taught me how to do it right, telling me to ask the customer if I'd done a good job and to offer to reshine the shoes if the customer wasn't satisfied.

My duties increased as I grew older. By age ten, I was clearing tables and working as the janitor. Dad beamed when he told me that I was the best "mop guy" he'd ever had.

Working in the restaurant was a source of great pride because I was pitching in for the good of the whole family. But my father made it clear I had to meet certain stan-

dards to be part of the team. I had to be punctual, hard-working, and polite to the customers.



Except for the shoe shining job, I was never paid for any work I did at the restaurant. One day, I made the mistake of telling Dad I thought he should give me \$10 a week. He said, "Okay, then how about you paying me for the three meals a day you eat here? And for the times you bring in your buddies for free sodas?" He figured I owed him about \$40 a week. This taught me that when you negotiate, you'd better know the other side's arguments as well as your own.

I remember coming home to Charleroi after being away in the Army about two years. I had just been promoted to captain and was full of pride as I walked into my parents' restaurant. The first thing Dad said was, "It's the janitor's day off. How about you cleaning up tonight?"

I can't believe this! I thought. I'm an officer in the United States Army! But it didn't matter. As far as Dad was concerned, I was just another member of the team. I reached for the mop.

Working for Dad had taught me that loyalty to a team comes first. It doesn't matter whether that team is involved in a family restaurant or Operation Desert Storm.

4. What other duties did the boy have as he grew older?
5. How did the boy feel about working in the family business?
6. What was the mistake the boy made one day?
7. What was the cost of the mistake for him?
8. What lesson did the boy learn from his mistake?
9. What kind of reception was the writer **expecting** when he returned home as an army officer?
10. What was the lesson the writer learned from **working** for his father?

B Retell the text using the following key words.

- small restaurant, first job, shoe-shining
- teach how to do it right, ask the customer, offer to **reshine** if not **satisfied**
- duties increased, mop guy, janitor
- source of pride, pitch in for the good of the family
- mistake, ask for pay, owe more to dad, a lesson, to **know the other's arguments** in negotiation
- officer in the US Army, still a boy in the family **team**, **cleaning up**
- lesson from working with his father, loyalty to team, come first

C Role-play the text.

Suppose you and your partner are the author's close friends (buddies). You have learned that he has to pay for the free sodas you and your friends drink in the restaurant. How do you feel about this deal? Are you going to do anything about it? Discuss these two problems with your partner.

Please write your answers on the chatting boards below and discuss with your partners.

(Above posted is a passage of a text, before-reading questions, new vocabularies, a relevant picture and a task with some questions and exercises.)



6楼

回复 ▾

After whatching the video. I think good behaviour is very important to our hunting job.We should take more time to prepare our interview.In order for finding good job ,We must pay attention to our dress up and exercise our language skill.What's more ,don't be late.I hope we will have a good state to interview.

椰茹玉



7楼

回复 ▾

Firstly,if we want to find a good job we should be genuine,trustworthy and responsbility.Personally, I think this point is very important for us. secondly,we must pay attention to our action. we should beam when we face to our interviewer.It will make the atmosphere relax.Finally,we must be with confidence. 刘娜 Sado

(第一组) 刘娜



8楼

回复 ▾

I'm sorry, I like English very much,but I can't understand it

该评论来自手机Qzone

韩由鲜



王猛 @韩由鲜 🍌加油

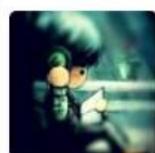


21楼

回复 ▾

Watch the video , I think going to attend an interview to be prepared. First of all, don't wear slippers and wear a hat. Second, we should smile looking at the interviewer to talk, can't look at other places. Third, in order to make a good impression it is best not to take mobile phones. If the above mentioned, is very beneficial for us to find a job.

刘兴



22楼

回复 ▾

I watched the video,i thought we already came out a common view.In order to look for a job, when we are free,we should pay attention to all things,we have to study hard and do more practice.

Totally,we should believe ourselves.If you make a plan and stick to it,i believe can to be a best man..... 🍌🍌
Mr.monitor(吴光顺)

班长吴光顺 🍌



该评论来自手机Qzone

班长吴光顺 最后一句在"i believe"和"can to..."中间加"we"!! 🍌

(Above posted are the comments of 5 examples of students' answers for the questions as mentioned formerly. Each of the comments is students' understandings of a unit's reading text.)

Part 2. A Student's Blog

★ QQ空间 她的主页 · 她的动态 ▶ 返回个人中心 Ms.Jenny [退出] 设置 消息 收藏 续费

曼陀罗、记着你的温度° 
 细数温情、你说无畏了颠沛流离。 <http://976890672.qzone.qq.com>

分享生活,留住感动.

主页 日志 相册 留言板 说说 个人档 音乐 时光轴 更多

日志 返回日志列表

《凯里学院综合英语》

👍 赞(7) | 💬 评论(9) | 🔄 转载 | 📄 分享 ▼ | 📄 复制地址 | 🌟 收藏 | ⋮ 更多 ▼ 上一篇 | 下一篇: **

From childhood to teenager ,I help my mother do not much. Just do the trivial in life. In the past , I helpd my mother with the chores on Sunday. On the Sunday morning ,I got up and made the bed firstly. Then I cleand the table and washed dishes when I finished breakfast. Finally ,I would help mom wash all clothes. At the same time ,I could feed the small dog. In the evening ,I folded the clothes and cleaned the bedroom. I also swept the floor and took out the trash.

Although these things are not worth mentioning ,I still feel proud.

(Above posted is a student's reflection paper written on her own blog.)

评论(9) 互动(7) 显示评论签名

1楼 回复 ▼

 韦俊佩 

AS a teenager ,I often my housework ,In my spare time ,I helped my mother do some housework .Such as cleaning window,washing some clothes.and so on .besides these , I helped my father washing his car.In my young ages , I have learned repairing by my father. when I learned , I felt very happy .Because I could do something for them.when they have no time to do .In my opinion ,we should try our best to help them ,especially in our free time. Come on ,everyone. 🍷

 (第四组) 庞雨婷 @韦俊佩 in my spare time后面的几句话要用一般现在时 , I have learned to repara..... , repara后要加相应的宾语 , when I learned后也要加宾语 , they have no time to do it

 韦俊佩 嗯嗯 好的 没注意

 (第四组) 庞雨婷 @韦俊佩 没事 😊

我也说一句



4楼

回复 ▾

I come from countryside , as we all know , we help parents do housework like our do homework . For example , we clean room , wash clothes and wipe windowes and so on. Althoug we do too trivial to mention , we make the family have a relax , this is my happiness. All in all , parents do not hope we to do mach , we as long as trying our best !

周承敏



该评论来自手机Qzone



(第四组) 庞雨婷 @周承敏 like在此句中为介词, 应为like doing homework, room作为房间时为可数名词, 不能单独出现, 应为rooms. hope后接宾格, 应为hope us. 最后一句为as long as we try our best, 因为as long as为连词, 连接句子, 需要谓语



周承敏 @ (第四组) 庞雨婷 I am sorry , I will try my best next time. Thanks !



(第四组) 庞雨婷 @周承敏 nothig , let's try our best together



周承敏 @ (第四组) 庞雨婷 ok !



7楼

回复 ▾

I am a boy from country , From childhood to teenager , I always help my mather cook, because mather and father go home very late every day, I must cook for them every day, This can lighten their burden . Now , I leave them . They will be harder than before. So I must go home this National Day . I think this is what I should do . So we shouldn't get rewards from them .
How do you think what I said .

何永国



8楼

回复 ▾

There are four people in my home.I stady with my grandmother when I was yong .my parents aways went out to own money at that time I was

遇见未知的自己



该评论来自手机Qzone



9楼

回复 ▾

You guys did a very good job ! 👍👍👍



(第四组) 庞雨婷 @Ms.Jenny thank you , teacher 😊

Ms.Jenny 15年

(Above posted are the reflections and comments written on her blog from other students who work with her in a same group. Below each student's comment, the blog owner wrote a comment to help other partner to improve their English. At the bottom of the posting, the teacher gave a brief comment for their group work.)

APPENDIX VI

A Table of a Coding Scheme Used to Analyze the Interview Data

Category	Code	Meaning
Aspects of Opinions on Social Constructivist BALL	1	Reading environment
	2	Peers collaboration & scaffolding; Expert/teacher collaboration & scaffolding
	3	Individual learning space
	4	Source of information and knowledge, such as vocabulary, grammar, and culture.
	5	Knowledge on other skills of English, such as writing, speaking, listening, and critical thinking.
	6	Tools, such as pictures, videos, and comments boards
	7	Learning style
	8	Time and money
	9	Effectiveness
Attitudes	+	Positive/yes
	-	Negative/no
Improved aspects	V	Vocabulary
	C	Cultural background
	U	Understanding/Comprehensive ability
The Time Reference	P	Past
	N	Now
	F	Future
Preference	b	Books on papers
	c	Computers
Tools	p	Pictures
	v	Videos
	o	Others' comments
Others	S	Suggestion
	E	Experience
	I	Item
	&	And

