

HOW TO IMPROVE READING SKILL?

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Abstract. *In this article, we will provide general information about the reading section. The key aspects of reading comprehension will be explained step by step. We will also discuss how to use time efficiently and apply the right strategic formulas.*

Key words: *cognitive process, Linguists, reading comprehension, scanning, skimming, decoding, vocabulary and fluency.*

КАК УЛУЧШИТЬ НАВЫК ЧТЕНИЯ?

Аннотация. *В этой статье мы предоставим общую информацию о разделе чтения. Ключевые аспекты понимания текста будут объяснены шаг за шагом. Также мы рассмотрим, как эффективно использовать время и применять правильные стратегические формулы.*

Ключевые слова: *когнитивный процесс, лингвисты, сканирование, беглое чтение, декодирование, словарь, беглость.*

WHAT IS READING?

Reading is a complex "cognitive process" of decoding symbols in order to construct or derive meaning. Reading is a means of language acquisition, communication, and of sharing information and ideas. Reading is one of the subjects to get information and knowledge about everything readers need from the written form. Reading is very important, and it is one of the four language skills that should be mastered by student for all level. According to Nunan (2003) reading is a fluent process of readers combining information from a text and their own background knowledge to build meaning. Then, Baker and Brown in Dorn and Soff os (2005) says that reading is a complex process involving a network of cognitive actions that work together to construct meaning. Then, Johnson states in his book that reading is the act of linking one idea to another.

In addition, Linguists also give definitions about reading, their opinions about reading vary.

Some of them say that reading is the process to get, to understand, to catch the content of the reading. And also reading is a process to understand a written text which means extracting the required information from it as efficiently as possible. Those statements above show the various definitions of reading, they mean generally. Reading means a complex process of thinking in assigning meaning from printed materials which involve most of the reader's intellectual act such as pronunciation and comprehension in order to receive ideas or information extended by the text.

It can be seen that reading is not only looking at word in the form of graphic symbols but also getting meaning from word to word or line to line to understand what we read. It means that reading is process to understand the text content and to get information.

What is reading comprehension?

Understanding a written text means extracting the required information from it as efficiently as possible. For example, we apply different reading strategies when looking at a notice board to see if there is an advertisement for a particular type of flat and when carefully reading an article of special interest in a scientific journal. Yet locating the relevant advertisement on the board and understanding the new information contained in the article demonstrates that the reading purpose in each case has been successfully fulfilled. In the first case, a competent reader will quickly reject the irrelevant information and find what he is looking for. In the second case, it is not enough to understand the gist of the text; more detailed comprehension is necessary. It is therefore essential to take the following elements into consideration.

Three-Level Taxonomy of Comprehension

Thomas Barrett has suggested the following three types of action with his three-level taxonomy of reading comprehension (Clymer 1968).

Literal Comprehension: Literal comprehension, the lowest of the three levels, requires a reader to be able to retell or recall the facts or information presented in a text. Names of characters and details of the setting are examples of literal comprehension. The information required for literal comprehension comes largely from the text itself. Recall comprehension can easily be evaluated. In responding to a literal question, the reader either can recall the information from the text or he or she cannot. [1;14]

Inferential Comprehension: Inferential comprehension, the next level, refers to the ability of a reader to take in information that is inferred or implied within a text. If a text indicates that a character is carrying an umbrella while walking down a street on a cloudy day, you can infer that the character is expecting rain.

Inferential comprehension is more sophisticated than literal comprehension because it requires the orchestration and manipulation of information from the text as well as information that resides within the readers—their background knowledge.

Critical Comprehension: Critical or evaluative comprehension, the third and highest level in the taxonomy, involves making critical judgments about the information presented in the text.

Were the characters reputable and honest in their actions? Did the selection offer the reader new information, new insights, or added enjoyment? Were the characters authentic? Was the literary quality of the text high? Answers to such questions require a high level of interaction between information from the text, the reader, perhaps other people with whom the reader has interacted, or even other texts the reader has read. Moreover, in-depth analysis and critical thinking are necessary to make informed judgments and evaluations. Because responses to inferential and critical-level questions are highly dependent on the reader's own background, interest, and disposition, determining a reader's level and the quality of a reader's inferential and critical comprehension is not easy. [2;4]

All three levels of comprehension are important and need to be fostered. However, it has generally been the case that inferential and critical comprehension are not sufficiently addressed in many classrooms and reading programs. These levels are not easily evaluated and do not lend themselves to the “teacher asks and student answers” type of comprehension discussions that follow many reading lessons. Nevertheless, a focus on inferential and critical comprehension is appropriate, and nurtures the high-level thinking that one would expect to find in high-performing classrooms. [3;16]

What is scanning?

Scanning is very high-speed reading. When you scan, you have a question in mind. You do not read every word, only the words that answer your question. Practice in scanning will help you learn to skip over unimportant words so that you can read faster. In this unit, you'll practice scanning many different kinds of materials. You should work as quickly as possible on all the exercises. Remember that scanning is a high-speed skill. Scanning in everyday life . Scanning is a skill that you often use in daily life. For example, you might scan the list of names in a telephone directory in order to find a phone number.

Intensive Reading:

-You need to have your aims clear in mind when undertaking intensive reading. Remember this is going to be far more time consuming than scanning or skimming.

-If you need to list the chronology of events in a long passage, you will need to read it intensively.

-This type of reading has indeed beneficial to language learners as it helps them understand vocabulary by deducing the meaning of words in context.

-It moreover, helps with retention of information for long periods of time and knowledge resulting from intensive reading persists in your long term memory.

-This is one reason why reading huge amounts of information just before an exam does not work very well.

-When students do this, they undertake neither type of reading process effectively, especially neglecting intensive reading. They may remember the answers in an exam but will likely forget everything soon afterwards.

Extensive reading:

-Extensive reading involves reading for pleasure.

-Because there is an element of enjoyment in extensive reading it is unlikely that students will undertake extensive reading of a text they do not like.

-It also requires a fluid decoding and assimilation of the text and content in front of you.

-If the text is difficult and you stop every few minutes to figure out what is being said or to look up new words in the dictionary, you are breaking your concentration and diverting your thoughts. [4.8]

How to become an efficient Reader?

Becoming a proficient reader requires mastery of several skills that need to be applied simultaneously. Obviously, this doesn't happen overnight. These basic skills should be learned first in isolation, then as readers become more adept at each one, they can progress and combine until they can read independently with full comprehension of what they read. Basic reading skills encompass a range from phonics to comprehension.

1. Decoding:

Decoding or sounding out words is the first step in reading. Students can decode when they understand that each letter of the alphabet has a corresponding sound. Students then learn how to look at words in print, isolate each separate sound, and then blend them to read the word as a whole. The goal of phonics instruction is to enable readers to become proficient at decoding so they are able to read words on their own and with little effort.

2. Vocabulary:

Good readers increase their vocabulary every time they read and are able to recall these words when they see them again. They begin by developing a sight word vocabulary. Sight words are words that are frequently found often in common speech and books, such as "the," "is," "were," "was" and "said." Generally, these words cannot be sounded out, so readers have to memorize them. Knowledge of these words is essential because they can be found in any book.

3. Fluency

Fluency is the ability to read accurately with expression and at a speed that lends itself to comprehension. Fluent readers will be able to read smoothly without having to take a lot of time to sound out words. They are also able to use context clues to figure out unknown words. Fluency is most evident when a person reads aloud, but it can also be seen by the reader's ability to understand what they read. Fluent readers are able to pay attention to the details in a book because they don't have to spend a lot of time sounding out words.

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