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## Effective Reading Strategies in Teaching English

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### ANNOTATION

Reading is one of the four fundamental skills in learning English and considered one of the most difficult skills for a person who is learning a foreign language. Students use a variety of reading strategies and approaches. In teaching reading, reading skills are often confused with strategies. Reading skill is defined as a tool a student uses to improve their ability to read. A reading strategy is a plan or a way to do something; a specific procedure used to perform a skill. In this article, we will discuss some effective reading strategies in teaching English as a foreign language.

**KEYWORDS:** reading, reading skill, reading strategy, teaching English.

### Introduction

There are a number reading strategies and approaches in teaching English. In early stage of learning a foreign language, students use a dictionary while reading, try to memorize or memorize words, take notes and translate word by word. At a later stage of learning, they acquire necessary skills and abilities; they guess the meanings of the words contained in the text from the context. At the final stages, students use strategies such as use of transitional words, search for clues in the text and the use of accumulated and background knowledge. In teaching reading, reading skills are often confused with strategies. Reading skill is defined as a tool a student uses to improve their ability to read. A reading strategy is a plan or a way to do something; a specific procedure used to perform a skill. For example, students may have difficulty completing a short reading task, such as a newspaper article. This difficulty is related to the lack of ability to focus and concentrate on the written words. As many students need guidance and strategies to help them focus on reading and do more than just read words on paper.

### Materials and Methods

The content skills of a strategic reader can be broken down into seven areas, namely:

1. Forecasting - a prediction based on observations and / or personal experience.
2. Visualization - the formation of mental images of scenes, characters and events.
3. Linking - linking two or more things together or seeing a connection when reading a text.

4. Question - asking or considering.
5. Clarification - to make clear or to become clear and free from confusion.
6. Summation - concisely define the essence of the text.
7. Evaluation - to form an opinion about what was read [1].

In order to form reading skills in English, linguists offer the teacher the following strategies:

- we need to teach students to focus on the text itself, and not on the sentences in it. It is necessary to start with a global understanding of the text and move towards a detailed understanding, and not vice versa, the learner needs to use authentic text when possible. Authentic text does not make learning more difficult. Difficulty depends on the activity that is required of students, and not on the text itself. In other words, the teacher should evaluate the assignments he gives for reading, not the reading itself;
- We should focus on reading skills and learning strategies and plan comprehension exercises for each of them; Students should be taught to think by providing sufficient evidence to enable them to follow the right path;
- should not be superimposed on the text of the exercise. Students have to use a lot of exercise to spoil the pleasure of reading.
- Help students increase their reading speed.
- It is necessary to use different procedures in managing the student's reading. Self-correcting exercises are extremely beneficial (Munoz, 2009).

There are many strategies in teaching reading. It is difficult to decide which strategies are the most significant. But some of the most effective scientists identify the following:

- the challenge of the relevant basic knowledge;
- predicting what will be learned and what will happen;
- creating mental images;
- self-control and self-correction;
- using corrective strategies such as rereading or seeking help;
- identifying the most important ideas and events and observing how they are connected;
- the ability to draw conclusions, justify your opinion;
- compare and contrast what is read and background knowledge, find out unknown words, summarize what has been read.

One of the most important prerequisites for reading is background knowledge. Scholars argue that knowledge is an essential component of reading comprehension. Various studies have shown that the amount of a reader's prior knowledge can be a very strong determinant of how much the reader can understand the text they are reading. The accumulated knowledge helps students interpret reading materials personally, on an individual basis. Thus, it is necessary for teachers to teach students how to use their own basic knowledge when reading a text as a strategy for its text. A student with strong background knowledge will have a better ability to

understand and represent what the author is trying to portray in the text. Thus, it can be argued that a strong prior knowledge base has a very strong effect on how well the reader will understand the text.

When students make predictions, they decide their reading goals. Text prediction interacts closely with background knowledge. Using their background knowledge, students figure out or predict what will happen next. In addition, they are engaged in making predictions before reading, first relying on basic knowledge. By applying this strategy, students are given the opportunity to integrate what they know while reading, as well as being exposed to new information that may conflict with their own assumptions, which in turn can strengthen critical thinking skills.

In self-monitoring or self-correction, students demonstrate the ability to recognize that what they are reading does not make sense and apply various strategies to deal with this problem. When a student comes across an unfamiliar word while reading, he needs to decide whether to reread the sentence, read on, voice the word, or look it up in a dictionary.

Identifying the main events or ideas in a text is something that students with reading skills should do. They should constantly look for ideas in the text they are reading and identify the main points in each section of the reading. In addition, students have the opportunity to learn and discuss the main events taking place in the text. In addition, these readers also have the ability to ignore information that is not important.

Generalization is a strategy that many students have difficulty applying. This strategy is important because it helps them build an information base. Scholars define generalization as: removing unnecessary and unimportant information, dividing information into groups, finding and using the author's main ideas, and compiling and explaining one's own main idea if the author of the text did not clearly formulate the idea.

Drawing conclusions and asking questions is another strategy that learners often describe as boring and uninteresting. Perhaps this point of view is due to the fact that students are used to their teachers themselves asking them questions, and not vice versa. However, if teachers ask all questions about the text, students will not become strategic readers. Instead, they need to learn to ask themselves questions while reading. This strategy leads to a more complete understanding of the text.

The reading teaching strategies outlined above can be applied to teaching reading in English. As students become more competent readers they, in turn, become more motivated to learn the language. According to linguist research, motivating students to learn is extremely complex and continues to challenge researchers with its conceptualization and re-conceptualization, and incorporation and operationalization into interventional research. In addition, research has shown that learning motivation should be seen as a concept that is intertwined with learning strategy. Thus, students, in order to become strategic, self-regulating readers and must also be attracted by readers.

## Results and Discussions

Scholars have developed many effective reading teaching methods so that educators can use to motivate students to focus on either one or more reading strategies. Let's briefly consider some of them that are especially useful and can be easily applied in the classroom.

Procedural prompts can be used to help students generate questions and be able to summarize what they have read. Linguists argue that this should be the first step in teaching students about cognitive strategies. It is procedural prompts that serve to develop the basic knowledge of students and provide support for knowledge,

which they can apply. For example, when asking questions about a narrative text, educators encourage teachers and students to give or formulate clues based on the grammar of the text itself:

- Who are the main characters?
- What problem is the main character facing?
- What attempts were made to solve the problem?
- How was the problem finally solved?
- What is the theme of the story?

Besides, in order to teach students how to use different reading strategies, teachers should use "activities" such as discussion to encourage students to relate the topic of the text to their own experience. Since learners of reading cannot retell or recount all the events that occur in a text, teachers should help students to understand the meaning of the text they are reading using their own background knowledge.

An effective way to encourage students to turn to background knowledge is to engage them in discussion before reading. During the class, the teacher asks questions to the students before they begin to read the passage. First, she or he models questions, literal or logical. The students should then read the passage looking for answers. After this, students are divided into small groups or pairs and asked to write their own questions, which they will later share with other learners. When applying this strategy, it is necessary to teach students to distinguish between questions that require one-word answers and questions that require answers that are more detailed.

### Conclusion

To conclude, the reading teaching strategies outlined above can be applied to teaching reading in English so that students become more competent readers and become more motivated to learn the language.

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