

Chapter 1 : Recommendations and strategies for learning english

Learning a foreign language is a basic need for professionals. NEED, not support, or complement. Nowadays, in order to be successful in professional life and make our lives easier, it is essential to improve our English language level since it is the universal language that is spoken, read, and written in many parts of the world.

1-Reading

1-1-Definition of reading

Reading was defined as “the process of constructing meaning from written texts,” “it is a complex skill requiring the coordination of a number of interrelated sources of information”.

1-2-The importance of reading

Reading is one of the important aspects that need to be mastered because reading is the foundation of learning cross-disciplinary subjects. The ability to read is very important for finding a job or going to college. The ability to read plays an important role in improving individual life, abilities in school, and it is important to support the development of a country, because the ability to read provides many benefits, including adding to the repertoire of knowledge, opening up new information, the ability to explain new information to others, increase concentration, and also for entertainment.

1-3-How to learn reading?

Learning how to read in English is the best way to acquire a new vocabulary, as it improves your grammatical understanding and, therefore, the grammar itself.

Follow these recommendations to work on your comprehension "also in reading," and know how to read in English with the best results.

- Start with books, texts, or content that you like and are easy to read. Read as much as you can, but without saturating yourself; the important thing is that you do it every day and include your reading in English in your daily routine.

- Forget about translating in your mind; try to understand the context “in English”; over time, your mind will be able to assimilate the information in English. Remember that it is like learning to read again; at first, you will go slowly, but your speed in both reading and comprehension will improve with perseverance.

- The most crucial thing of all is that you do exercises, where you can listen to yourself; in this way you are adding great value to your communication, here our initial advice to read aloud, focused.

-Underline the new words and take vocabulary (Find the new words in your dictionary or internet).

- Try to live in English. Set your phone, computer, and other devices to English.

1-4-Reading comprehension

Reading comprehension is the ability to read a text, process it and understand its meaning. It is based on two interrelated skills: word reading (being able to decode the symbols in reading) and language comprehension (being able to understand the meaning of words and sentences).

1-5- Reading Strategies

Reading strategies refer to one kind of monitoring system that involves readers' selfreflection, awareness of interaction with text and relationship of reading strategies and text comprehension and the aim of reading strategies is to understand the meaning of the given text. Reading strategies is collaborative approach in reading process and includes the use of cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies. Good teaching and learning strategies in reading serve multiple purposes including improving other skills of the language including writing and speaking skills.

1-5-1-Pre-, While- and Post-reading Strategies

Adding enrichment-related tasks is another way to render authentic reading texts constructively teachable. This can be done by adding pre-reading tasks that aim at activating readers' schemas and act as a warming-up stage focusing on examining the cover page, title, author, charts, headings, font size and front flaps. Through using pictures teachers can start an active prereading activity by urging students to describe the essence of the picture, and then ask them to complete or give a title to the picture.

The while-reading strategy encourages readers to deal more actively, flexibly and interactively with reading texts. During this stage, students read parts of the text, and then stop to say something like commenting, predicting, asking questions or making a certain endophoric connection. Teachers handle the while-reading process by presenting the "surface problem" where they ask some factual or linear questions – avoiding yes/no questions, and completing/filling in a table or making lists. After this, teachers can do more to introduce the deeper problem by asking more indepth questions such as those based on higher order thinking skills (HOTS), true or false questions with reasons and various activities focusing on deriving the meaning of the newly introduced vocabulary grounded on textual analysis.

By contrast, the post-reading technique usually contains various HOT questions that check readers' text comprehension. During this phase, students use a plethora of reading strategies to

clarify any confusing issues, summarizing the texts and identifying details, events and characters as well as textual based inferences. Students can use the scale strategy by expressing the degree of their agreement – strongly agree, disagree, agree or strongly disagree. Retelling is another post-reading strategy where readers have to express the events in their own language, either orally or in writing.

1-5-2- SQ3R Method

SQ3R method is a method that was design by Francis Pleasant Robinson to help learners understand the meaning of the context text. This method was developed in the 1940s, and it has been successfully for many years. Considerable experimentation has been done and the system has proven effective in increasing students' retention. Basically, SQ3R is the way of learning as you read. Activating SQ3R method is the key for readers to achieve reading comprehension and help students become independent readers. They learn to think that reading by using method will help them to analyze the text. SQ3R, stands for Survey, Question, read, recite, and review.

***Survey :** When you are assigned a section of textbook to study, first survey the pages to get a general idea of the material. Skim quickly over the topic headings: look a pictures, graphs, charts, or diagrams; see if there are questions or a summary at the end.

***Question :** After a rapid survey, ask your self-questions based on the material you have surveyed. This helps you to read with a purpose, looking for specific answers and anticipating essential points of information.

***Read :** Next read is rapidly as possible. Because you know what you are looking for and where you are going, your reading speed should be faster than if you had not first surveyed the pages and formulated questions for which you are seeking answers.

***Recite :** At the end of each section, summarize the material by reciting to yourself the important points. This helps you consolidate the information you have read, relate it previous information, and prepare yourself for what is to follow.

***Review :** Finally, when you have finished the assignment, immediately review the material so that it will be form a unified whole. Also, when you have the next surveying it rapidly to refresh your memory. Each section though read separately and at different times, will fit together into the total organization of the material that the author intended.

1-5-3-Scanning and Skimming strategies

***Scanning :** Scanning, is looking for specific information within a text such as dates, names, places, among others and to defined as the ability to locate specific facts and details quickly, is regarded as a desirable reading skill and is taught in most development reading courses.

***Skimming :** Scimming is casting eyes over the surface – to get a general idea of what the text is about (as, for example, when we run our eyes over a film review to see what the film is about and what the reviewer thought about it, or when we look quickly at a report to get a feel for the topic and what its conclusion are).

skimming is getting the main idea or gist of a selection quickly in a written text where the student develop powers of inference through systematic practice which encourages them to anticipate of a text. So, skimming can help the students to find the key words that permit them to infer the general sense of a text to interpret text faster and advance the reading process.

1-5-4-Intensive and Extensive Reading

Extensive reading (ER) is to read widely and in large quantities, with the main aim to enjoy reading activities, while the intensive (IR) reading is the reading that is only limited to the short text and carried out with the aim of understanding the whole content of reading. As an approach to reading literacy, these two methods differentiated in various aspects relating to reading activities, which include the main objectives of reading, focus on reading text, the sources, and types of reading, the number of reading text, the speed of reading level, and the method of reading.

Table1 : Characteristics of extensive and intensive reading strategies.

Types of Reading	Intensive	Extensive
Class goal (general purpose)	<i>Read accurately</i> (reading as accurately as possible)	<i>Read fluently</i> (reading as smoothly as possible)
Reading purpose (aim)	- <i>Translate</i> - <i>Answer questions</i>	- <i>Get/obtain information</i> - <i>Enjoy</i>
Focus (attention)	<i>Word by word</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
Material (reading material)	- <i>Often difficult</i> - <i>Lecturer's choice</i> (determined by the lecturers)	- <i>Easy</i> - <i>Student's choice</i> (chosen by each students)
Amount (quantity)	<i>Not much</i>	<i>A lot</i>
Speed	<i>Slower</i> (a bit slow)	<i>Faster</i> (above normal speed)
Method (way)	- <i>Use dictionary</i> (use the dictionary as often as possible)	- <i>Minimum use of dictionary</i> (dictionary occasionally used)

2-Listening

It is widely acknowledged that listening plays a fundamental role in English language learning and teaching in the 21st century.

***Audios** : Listen to the audio and write a summary of what you understood, make your flashcard with the vocabulary you don't understand.

***Songs** : Songs are a great source of 'real-life' language and you can use music to practise lots of different language.

***Movies and series** : Movies help students to improve both listening and speaking skills. Hence, this provides an opportunity for the students to learn the language using authentic materials and enhances their communication and conversation skills. Moreover, their self-confidence in using the language is improved by watching native speakers in the movies. Additionally, watching movies helps them improve not only their oral but also their written skills through reading subtitles.

2-1-Listening strategies

2-1-1-Cognitive Strategies

Cognitive strategy is considered a problem-solving technique that learners use to cope with the learning activities and make the process of acquiring the knowledge easier. Cognitive strategies refers to the process of employing the other sub-strategies as follows :

***Inferencing strategy :** The learners use the information to guess the meaning of the unfamiliar words associated with listening tasks or to support prediction based on co-contextual knowledge.

***Elaboration strategy :** The learners use their prior knowledge relating to the information obtained from the listening texts in order to fulfill the understanding.

***Note-taking strategy :** Learners write down key words while listening.

***Deduction strategy :** Learners reach a conclusion about the target language. This strategy helps students to make guesses based on partial comprehension of the text.

***Summarization strategy :** Learners try to recall or write a summary of the information about the listening text using the target language.

2-1-2-Metacognitive Strategies

Metacognitive strategies is management methods employed by the students to manage their learning through the activities of organizing, examining, evaluating and altering. For example, for organizing strategies, learners become aware of what to listen and then utilize the specific features of the aural language input that help them understand the aural input easily. Similarly, students who adopt this strategy will know what to listen and when to listen for the information because they know how to organize, take control of, and verify the gathered information.

2-1-3-Socio-affective Strategies

Socio-affective strategies is the process of employing the three following strategies:

***Cooperation strategy :** listeners work with friends to complete a listening task and check the accuracy together.

***Question-for-clarification strategy :** listeners ask their teachers or friends for explanation, clarification as well as feedback on what they have done with the listening task.

***Self-motivation strategy :** listeners get some ways to relieve anxiety and encourage and remind themselves of making progress.

3- Writing

1-Definition : Writing is the process of structuring ideas which can sharpen the intelligence. The learners should understand and think of many things to produce good writing.

2- Writing elements

As the output type of human language, writing conveys meaning in communication which is not just the conversion of sounds into writing. Linguists have collected and investigated the writing elements in varied ways based on functions and structures of writing.

***Vocabulary :**

-Adequate vocabulary is the critical premise and guarantee of effective writing. Vocabulary is one of the most important features that determine writing quality.

-Word choice is also what the learners should work with; to choose the best idiomatic words or synonyms, which are the wellmastered words, is important to avoid unnecessary difficulties for the readers.

***Grammar**

- Effective writing needs to convey information to readers clearly and correctly which basically means that good grammar helps the writers convey their ideas to the readers; on the contrary, grammatical errors make writings difficult to read and understand.

***Organization**

-Sentence variety is in high position of writing. Variety helps convey meaning and increases reader interest. In the writing, choosing long sentences or short sentences should be considered carefully. The excess of long sentences or short sentences may make writing hard to understand or readers lose interest.

- Structure : writing should be organized deliberately and the whole writing needs to be broken up into several sections due to their different meaning or aims.

***Punctuation and Spelling rules**

Except to make writing better understood by the readers, complying with the rules in punctuation and spelling aims to get writing standard and effective.

***Reader adaptation**

Reader adaptation concentrates on the content of writing. The writing should be measured according to its stating of all needed information clearly and convincingly. All good writers learn to look at their work from the reader's point of view.

3-Writing strategies

3-1- 8-step writing strategy

The 8-step strategy aims to help students formulate a step-by-step process for describing paragraphs writing.

1-Choose your topic : What do you want your paragraph to be about?.

2-Write 2-3 topic sentences about your choice.

3-Brainstorm a list of words or phrases you could use to describe and discuss the topic you chose for your paragraph.

4. Create 3-4 sentences using some of the words/phrases you came up with.

5- Put those sentences in order to form a paragraph that makes sense to you.

6- Choose the best topic sentence from the choices in Footstep 2 for the sentences you have written.

7- Write a closing sentence to your paragraph.

8- Rewrite the final product.

3-2- POWER strategy for writing

The POWER strategy includes three stages. The first stage is a prewriting stage before you actually start writing and this includes the planning and organizing steps. The second stage is writing and includes the writing step. The third stage is the post-writing stage and includes the editing and revising steps.

***Topic sentence**

What is a topic sentence ? A topic sentence is the most important sentence in a paragraph. Sometimes referred to as a focus sentence, the topic sentence helps organize the paragraph by summarizing the information in the paragraph. In formal writing, the topic sentence is usually the first sentence in a paragraph (although it doesn't have to be).