

## READING STRATEGIES IN AN EFL CONTEXT

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**Abstract:** *The article reviews about the role of reading and its strategies in an EFL context. The process of reading has a huge impact on the formation of personality. With the help of reading in English, students' active and passive vocabulary of words is enriched, grammatical skills are formed, and the culture of this language is studied. One of the main problems of learning to read is the problem of selecting texts and clearly organizing work with them.*

**Key words:** *reading process, reading strategies, RAP, RIDA, 5 "S", SQ3R, reading stages, techniques.*

### ***2.1 Introduction***

For English language learners (ELLs), whether learning in an English-speaking country (ESL) or in a country where English is a foreign language (EFL), reading is considered to be an important means for developing English language ability (Gorsuch & Taguchi, 2010, p.28). Unsurprisingly, however, reading remains problematic for many ELLs, especially EFL students who have limited input sources (Gorusch & Taguchi, 2010; Mehrpour & Rahimi, 2010).

Mastering reading strategies is a prerequisite for the development of skills in foreign language reading. The development of these skills contributes to time and information resource efficiency by increasing the speed of working with a foreign language source of information, as well as achieving reading goals without the help of supports and formulations for the task.

### ***2.2 Defining the reading process***

Reading is one of the types of speech activity. From a psychological point of view, the reading process includes perceptual, mental and mnemonic activity. The purpose of reading is to extract and process the information contained in the text. As a result of processing information, understanding arises, therefore, reading should be considered as one of the types of communication. In fact, the essence of the process of obtaining information is reduced to decoding the meaning laid down by the author in the text. Decoding includes comparison, analysis, synthesis, generalization, abstraction and a number of other mental operations that are part of the reading mechanisms.

Burns, Roe, and Ross (1984) state eight aspects of reading process. They are (1) sensory aspect (the reader must be able to perceive the symbols set before him); (2) perceptual aspect (the reader must be able to interpret what he sees as symbols or words); (3) sequential aspect (the reader must be able to follow the linear, logical and grammatical patterns of the written words); (4) associational aspect (the reader must be able to recognize the relationship between

symbols and sounds, words and what they represent); (5) experiential aspect (the reader must be able to relate words back to direct experiences to give the words meaning); (6) learning aspect (the reader must be able to remember what was learned in the past and incorporate facts and new ideas); (7) thinking aspect (the reader must be able to make inferences from and evaluate the material read); and (8) affective aspect (it deals with the personal interest and attitudes of the reader that affect the task of reading). The aspects of the reading process combine to produce the reading product.

The huge information flow and globalization of modern society encourage the development of a more flexible approach in the organization of reading instruction. Modern methodological science has a large number of studies devoted to the formation of foreign language competence among students in the field of reading. Currently, the picture that has developed in the field of education is undergoing quite significant changes. Based on this, there is a desire to rethink some fundamental positions from scratch. There is a need to show the real communicative needs of students, to take into account the specifics of the formation of reading skills, while focusing on the personality of the reader as an active "accomplice" of the learning process. Researchers are tasked with finding ways to optimize the process of learning foreign languages. The first is the Simple View of Reading (SVR) which states that reading is a combination of two distinct components: decoding and linguistic comprehension (Hoover & Gough, 1990, p.128). Decoding consists of phonological awareness and orthographic knowledge (Silverman, Speece, & Harring, 2013, p.108). Linguistic comprehension refers to deriving interpretations of sentences, paragraphs, and/or whole texts based on the word-level meanings (Hoover & Gough, 1990, p.131). SVR posits that these are both necessary, but not sufficient on their own to account for reading. It implies that understanding of a text requires only knowledge of vocabulary and syntax. Thus, in this model, readers passively receive information from the text; 'meaning resides in the text itself, and the goal of the reader is to reproduce that meaning' (Dole, et al., 1991, p.240). As Goodman states:

*...reading is a psycholinguistic guessing game. It involves an interaction between thought and language. Efficient reading does not result from precise perception and identification of all elements, but from skill in selecting the fewest, most productive cues necessary to produce guesses which are right the first time (1967, p.127).*

In addition, understanding a foreign language text requires the presence of a certain perceptual and semantic base, that is, possession of a set of phonetic, lexical and grammatical informative features that make the recognition process instantaneous. However, if such a base has not been created or turned out to be insufficiently strong, then the perceptual actions of the reader take expanded forms and are performed with a larger or smaller interval, which makes it difficult or even disrupts the extraction of information.

### ***2.3 Classification of reading strategies***

Reading strategies are various combinations of techniques that are used to perceive textual information and process it in accordance with a communicative and cognitive task.

Working with any text involves three stages:

- Pre-reading
- While-reading

- Post-reading

The most common reading strategies that I use at different stages of working with text in foreign language lessons:

- Pre-reading stage

The purpose of pre-text strategies is to set the goals and objectives of reading, actualization or familiarization with important concepts, terms, keywords, updating previous knowledge, diagnostics, formation of a reading mindset using questions or tasks, increasing the speed of reading and the number of readings, motivating the reader, enabling the mechanism of anticipation -forecasting the content, thematic and emotional orientation, forming the ability and habit of thinking about the text before reading.

- While-reading stage

The purpose of strategies in the executive phase of reading is to understand the text and create its reader's interpretation, to put forward a hypothesis about the content of what is being read, its confirmation/rejection, contextual and semantic guess, thinking during reading about what and how I read and how well I understand what I read.

- Post-reading stage

The purpose of the post-reading strategy is to apply, use the material in a variety of situations, forms, spheres, and include it in other, larger-scale activities. Strategies are associated with the assimilation, expansion, deepening, discussion of what has been read, there is an adjustment of the reader's interpretation of the author's meaning.

#### ***2.4 Reading strategies: RAP, RIDA 5 "S" and SQ3R***

To achieve the goals of semantic reading, the following strategies are used:

- RAP (Read-Ask-Put);
- RIDA (Read-Imagine-Describe-Add);
- 5 "S" method (skim-scan-select-slurp-summarize);
- SQ3R (Survey-Question-Read-Recite-Review).

The "RAP" strategy is based on retelling the content. If, while reading the text, the student meets an incomprehensible phrase or paragraph, he stops, asks himself what is being said in this passage and tries to retell it in his own words.

The "RIDA" strategy connects the imagination: while reading, imagine scenes like in a movie. Mark in the margins the places that gave the most vivid images.

The five "S" method helps to choose the right reading style so as not to waste time, although it takes more than 10 minutes.

Its stages:

- ✓ read the introduction, conclusions, first and last sentence of each paragraph;
- ✓ search for the necessary information;
- ✓ select the sections it is necessary to read;
- ✓ the selected passages should be read slowly and in more depth, with an attempt to understand the information sought;

- ✓ read again if necessary;

- ✓ use a plan, questions, or keywords as a basis for making notes.

#### **SQ3R**



This strategy involves the following steps:

- ✓ review the text, paying attention not to the headings, subheadings, diagrams, etc.;
- ✓ ask yourself questions about the headings or from the post-text task.
- ✓ read the entire text slowly, trying to understand the meaning of what you read, mark important points with a pencil;
- ✓ try to briefly write down the main points from memory;
- ✓ check the correctness of your notes by rereading the text a couple of times, add information to them if you missed something.

The listed styles and strategies are suitable not only for students, but also for teachers reading English literature or academic articles. The universal techniques that will be useful to everyone to achieve the goals of reading in any language are listed.

### ***2.5 Research design***

Some techniques for relieving difficulties when reading texts in the junior level:

- to successfully master the technique of reading, phonetic exercises should be carried out at each lesson (conduct exercises on sound-letter correspondences, learn small rhymes, rhymes for training complex sounds);
- conduct training exercises with new words based on the studied material (read a new word by analogy with an already familiar one, read words with a particular sound, connect rhyming words, connect words with the corresponding sound or completely transcription);
- before reading a particular text, you should first work out the vocabulary presented in it (in the form of training exercises, oral dialogue);
- to teach the skill of reading to oneself, built on the processes of internal speech, proceeding with hidden articulation;
- it is necessary to form forecasting mechanisms, guesses, identification in children, teach them to analyze, find language supports in the text, use a dictionary if necessary;
- it is necessary to teach reading techniques on well-learned lexical and grammatical material;
- texts should be selected based on the program corresponding to a certain period of study;
- select texts in accordance with the age characteristics, speech and life experience of students, their interests;
- the volume of texts should not exceed the permissible;
- texts should be entertaining and attractive plot, be accessible from the point of view of language difficulties, be relevant from the standpoint of universal values, contain a problem.

The subjects and problems of texts form the necessary language and speech skills and abilities.

### ***2.6 Conclusion***

Reading is the ability to understand and reflect on a written text, use it to achieve a certain goal, learn something new, develop, and also participate in the life of society.

The problem of teaching reading is one of the most urgent in connection with the modernization of general education. Reading along with listening, writing and speaking is usually attributed to one of the types of speech activity. Speech activity is understood as one of the main human activities aimed at satisfying the need to be understood. As one of the types

of speech activity, reading has a certain structure and performs a number of functions, among which there are cognitive, regulatory and value-oriented.

There are many types of reading skills, and there are types of reading strategies.

A reading strategy is the intentional thinking and choices that readers make. Strategies help the reader take control of reading.

Reading strategies empower the reader to engage in metacognition. Big word, right? It simply means the reader is aware of comprehension during the reader.

How to teach the reading process? Teach reading strategies.

These strategies ensure readers aware of their own thinking. Here is list of some of these strategies:

- ✓ RAP (Read-Ask-Put);
- ✓ RIDA (Read-Imagine-Describe-Add);
- ✓ 5 "S" method (skim-scan-select-slurp-summarize);
- ✓ SQ3R (Survey-Question-Read-Recite-Review).

Reading strategies must be taught to help students master reading skills. Model, explain, guide, practice, and feedback are all needed to help students learn reading strategies.

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