



READING FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES

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ABSTRACT:

Language is the 'species-specific'. It is a social phenomenon and is a means of human communication. Learning a language is a process which requires four skills;

1. Listening
2. Speaking
3. Reading
4. Writing

Reading is the most significant skill which one needs to acquire, not only for the communication but so many valuable benefits. Among the most noticeable advantages of reading are, having knowledge, specific skills, information regarding various processes or manufacturing, psychological and philosophical development and some reading is a part of practice and so one can say that reading can make man perfect, but what to read and why one is reading are the two important questions and reader must have the answers of these questions in his mind. Reading is possible after having the knowledge of visual and vocal symbols of language. The word 'reading' implies reading with comprehension. Reading without purpose lacks the comprehension. Good readers read for different purposes. Having a purpose helps reader remember what they read and helps them determine what is important. In the present paper effort is made to explain the different strategies for effective reading for academic purpose. For the proper reading and understanding one should have reading ability, clear and logical thinking comparison capacity, habit of note making, knowledge of various theories, understanding of context and vocabulary in use etc. after having such skills only one can be the best reader and for that one has to Read! Read! Read!

Keywords: Language, four skills of language learning, Reading-comprehension, vocabulary, academic purpose

Learning a language is a skill. A language can be learnt by an individual not simply by learning about the language, but by experiencing it. In the recent years, the emphasis has been shifted from the teaching of language as a system to the teaching of language as a means of communication. This has resulted in the teaching/learning of language as developing the four language skills, namely; listening, speaking, learning and writing. The recent experiment in language learning has proved that reading is an important skill associated with comprehension of ideas and acceptance or rejection of messages. Listening and speaking are basic skills but reading and writing need knowledge and education. But only being literate is not enough to be knowledgeable, cultured and well-mannered human being. For that one need proper guidance which is not possible at hand all the time, in the form of person, friends, guide or philosopher and so perhaps 'literature' is there in man's life to help him, to guide him. Book is the best friend of man, who can teach, entertain, inform and accompany him in any situation and at any time to have such friend one has to read carefully.

In childhood teachers taught us to enable to recognize words, to comprehend the meaning to react to what has been read and even to use proper stress, even to use proper stress, intonation and pauses suitable to the context. Even teachers taught us different methods of reading such as: reading alone, silent reading, extensive reading and intensive or critical reading through different methods. But after the secondary level one has to enhance own ability for the specific reading which helps to develop academic career. At the secondary school level, emphasis is laid on developing writing skill and so students read only for the preparation of the written examination and therefore at college and university level one has to read at his or her own to enhance the knowledge and academic quality.

Reading will be a crucial element of study in higher education of everyone. At this stage one has to read more independently and more widely than one may have previously. Some say that there is an art to reading effectively at tertiary level. Issue Disraeli, the literary father of Prime Minister Benjamin, pointed out that reading effectively is a skill to be developed much as learning to think and write effectively. Skill of reading doesn't mean reading loudly, fluently or convincingly. Skill lies in comprehension or proper understanding of what is read? Many readers mistakenly believe that reading faster will improve their

ability to study and achieve their deadlines. Speed reading by itself is not sufficient for effective study what is required is effective reading. Reading effectively or actively involves the use of a range of strategies, the first of which is clear thinking.

CLEAR THINKING:

Before reading one has to think clearly what it is that he/she is going to read and then what he/she is reading. The ability to think clearly lies at the heart of making sense of what can be confusing and contradictory information in complex academic texts. Clear thinking is a technique which helps the reader of a text to be able to see patterns and structures in what is read. One needs to be able to distinguish between accurate and inaccurate fact imagination, false or true, logical or illogical. One has to extract the key ideas from reading material and has to arrive at position where one has an understanding of the topic.

CONTEXT:

The most fundamental principle of clear thinking is always to keep ideas in context. One should have an understanding of writer's particular perspective their purpose behind the publication and the base of their views. In some cases it might be relatively straight forward to pick up on the writer's standpoint but in some cases the process is not so simple. By considering what writer is attempting to accomplish by the publication of the work in question one will gain more insight into the work itself. Writing can be persuasive and based in very subtle ways and skill of clear reader is to detect this at an easy stage. Reader has to be aware of unreliable sources used by writer. He must be able to distinguish between facts and lie.

FACTS AND VALUES:

Facts are described by scientists and philosopher as ideas which are universally true. Each writer has his own perspective and his own views of the world and everyone has his own construction of reality. We all live in the same world and experience the many of the same ideas, object, people and event. When we treat something as a 'fact' it means that we consider it to be universally agreed, but there is always a possibility that someone is there who might want to challenge this fact. Reader should not neglect the fact that there may be some

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ideas or the views of one individual based upon their own experiences, feeling and perception but not similar to the ideas of general group. Readers have to classify these facts into most valuable facts. The ideas or facts which are widely accepted are real 'values'. How widely the views of author are shared all over the world is the value of that specific work which has to be determined by the reader for proper understanding.

SCIENTIFIC APPROACH:

Another approach to clear thinking is to consider the principle behind what is generally considered as the "scientific" approach. The scientific approach combines two different types of knowledge.

- **Direct or indirect observations which are experienced by someone.**
- **Theories and explanations which relate or link those observations.**

Scientific approach need not be limited to scientific experiments. The basic principles apply to every day experience, which can keep the reader to clarify his/her understanding of them.

Reader must have pre-reading of text. He must have knowledge of basic facts, Natural laws and some scientific theories that may help him/her to differentiate between various theories related to specific work. Reader has to try to separate observation from the theories and explanations about them and has to summarize what he finds.

STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE READING:

To develop the reading skills one has to take efforts and should have to cultivate the habit of extensive reading. One must know the literary linguistic, intellectual, recreate oral and aesthetic objectives in reading. To be effective one has to read with purpose, with a plan and with concentration. Effective readers are always organized, they do not just look at words, and they search for meaning. They assimilate what is being read with what they already know; they are active readers who remember and draw conclusions from the material that is being read. This is done by surveying the text in advance of getting down to reading it in detail, and is known as pre-reading.

PRE-READING:

It is very useful technique for two main reasons. Pre-reading provides an over-view of the content and tone of what is read. It helps the reader to make judgment about whether or not to proceed to the next stage of reading in more detail. Pre-reading helps to activate reader's prior knowledge and prepare him/her for the acceptance of new information, experience and knowledge. Pre-reading is an organized process. Reading has to look at the contents has to react the preface or introduction, has to glance at the chapters and summaries of the chapters etc. which helps the reader to get the prior knowledge of the text.

SKIM-READING:

Reader has to find the topic sentence first and then he has to look for key words and phrases. It is very essential because without words and phrases the meaning would be lost. Sentences or phrases which are ordered with numbers or letters should be considered. Important statement and definitions are often put into italics or bold, should be read twice for proper understanding. Skimming is helpful to give attention to charts, diagrams maps etc. which are author often uses to present important information or ideas visually.

In educational process, one is reading for three basic purpose-one is to gather material, to understand and recall secondly.

To understand and evaluate the author's purpose in writing and the supportive arguments or evidence presented and background reading.

Readers have to make use of some systematic steps. Survey is the first step. Reader has to glance over the headings in the chapter, and has to glance over the headings in the chapter, and has to look for a central idea or core ideas. He has to event important points, definitions, key sentences etc. question: question own self about the headings, their purpose and meaning. This will arouse curiosity, will help to increase comprehension and will help to collect the essential information from reading.

Reads- Reader has to read to find the answer to his/her own questions. Reading has to be an active search for answers. More than once reading, may be required to clarify the doubts of the reader.

Recite- After proper reading one has to attempt to recall what is read and the answers to questions which are formed during and after the proper reading. While recalling reader has to use his own words, examples and phrases. A good
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way is to write down the summary on a piece of paper which will help to improve the knowledge of the text.

Review-Review is the last important step of reading process. One has to look over all the points and summary written and their relationships with each other. Reader has to check his memory by recalling the main points, definitions and the headings of the chapter also.

READING FOR ASSIGNMENTS:

This type of reading can be helpful to develop a systematic approach to reading. Following steps can be included in this type:

- Selection of a book or an article from the reading list that gives an overview of the assigned topic.
- Decision of what is required to find out.
- Write down some specific questions to focus the reading.
- Checking the details regarding author, publication date, title, place of publication, publisher etc. It will help to avoid the trouble of trying to find the material again or to add while compiling a list of reference.
- Collection from skim creating, page numbers of references etc. should be noted.

MAKING A RECORD OF READING:

Recording is another important strategy for reading. There must be a place for recording or note making, in reading process. This can be very personal or even an idiosyncratic activity. It not only includes the summary or other detail from the reading but allow over to these bibliographic details, accurate references, specific quotes, the title, author, the year of publication of a particular book, which is referred by author. It should be included in a record. It will help avoid the difficulty and extremely time. Consuming process to retrace the details.

CHALLENGING WHAT YOU READ:

Without underestimating own ability to challenge or question what has been written by authors, reader has to challenge that for further academic enhancement. Reader should calculate the author's expertise, the date of publication to understand its weightage. It will help the reader to know what

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he/she is reading is not outdated. Reader should also pay attention to particular, potential problematic approaches or use of language etc. This is very helpful to find out if there is something ambiguous then it needs challenging. Inconsistency, unintelligent use of language vacuous expression, lack of evidence etc. should be challenged by reader with the evidence of reference without any hesitation, it helps to improve the comparative skill to determine the standard of material.

Proper reading helps the reader to construct meaning in different ways. The reader must focus on and retrieve specific ideas, make inference, interpret and integrate information and ideas, and examine and evaluate text features. Transcending these processes are the meta-cognitive processes and strategies that allow readers to examine their understanding and adjust their approach. (Wasik & Turner 1996). Reading literacy is not only related to the academic enhancement or knowledge oriented. It is related to the various reasons. These reasons include reading for personal interest and pleasure, reading to learn, reading to entertain, reading to acquire some information, reading for literary experience and so on. There are so many techniques explained by the scholars to improve the reading ability, out of them some are used here. There may be a wide range of other reading techniques which may not be included here. There is no one specific and correct way to read, but developing an appropriate and accomplished technique should mean that increased knowledge, understanding and retention will be the outcomes of proper academic reading which will be fruitful in many ways.

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