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Item	Description of module
Subject Name	English
Paper name	English Language Teaching
Module title	LANGUAGE SKILLS LSRW III (READING)
Module ID	MODULE 14

14.0 Language Skills

14.1 Introduction

There are four language skills known as LSRW, where R stands for Reading. Conventionally, reading was contemplated as an inactive skill, but it is today measured as an active one. A person should be capable of reading in order to decode, to interpret and to understand properly the content of a reading material.

Reading is considered as a good source of self-education. A person cannot keep himself up-to-date of all the news and knowledge, religion and culture, literature and science of world, if he cannot read.

14.2. Definition of Reading

Reading is an intricate activity using the written symbols, meaning, ideas and the readers' background knowledge. On the surface level reading seems a simple process but a person who cannot read understands its importance. In fact it is a thinking process. Reading is hence taken to include all the comprehension procedure necessary to arrive at the renovation of authors' meaning. Any definition of the reading process therefore must include interpretation and evaluation of meanings as well as construction of meaning. When a reader starts to read, he feels comfortable, and he easily understands the meaning. Hence, he gets meaning, and easily matches the

information he gets from the text with that which is within his fund of knowledge he possesses.

The amount of information retrieved from the printed matter may differ from reader to reader. Here, the definition also needs some specification about the amount of information a receiver gets from the text. Written text not only provides linguistic meaning but also contextual meaning. Linguistic meaning involves represented information and this is called literal. Contextual includes the socio-cultural and intentional meaning incorporated in the text. A literal meaning of a text is accessible to the ordinary reader whereas to obtain the pragmatic meaning of the encoded matter, one must have rich exposure to the ethno linguistic aspect of the reading materials. The efficient reader can only retrieve both his literal and pragmatic meanings from a text. Thus, READING is an interaction between the language and thought. The writer encodes thought in the form of language through the words. If the reader is not able to interact with the words, the meaning will be lost.

The experts on reading have defined reading in different ways.

"the purpose of reading is the reconstruction of meaning. Meaning is not in print, but it is the meaning that the author begins with when he writes. Somehow, the reader strives to reconstruct this meaning as he reads". -- Goodman (1970)

"Reading has been defined as an act of responding to printed symbols so that meaning is created. It has long since been recognized, however, that getting meaning from the printed page is too limited as a definition of reading. Bringing meaning to the printed page indicates more accurately the reciprocal process between the printer symbols and the mind of the reader". - Jenkinson (1973)

"reading is the process of getting linguistic information 'via-print' through reading; the information conveyed by the writer through the print medium is retrieved by the reader". - Widdowson (1979)

14.3. The Reading As a Visual Process

Reading is a visual process. It is an experimental process; because, without experience the mind will be unable to invest meaning to the symbols that we see. 'Reading comes about when we take meaning to the printed page, not just the act of taking meaning from the printed page (Berg, 1971 : 10).'

Reading is a trans active process in which readers negotiate meaning or interpretation. During reading, the meaning does not go from the page to the reader; instead, it is a complex negotiation between the text and the reader that is shaped by the immediate situational context and broader socio linguistic contexts (Weaver, 1988).

The Reading Process
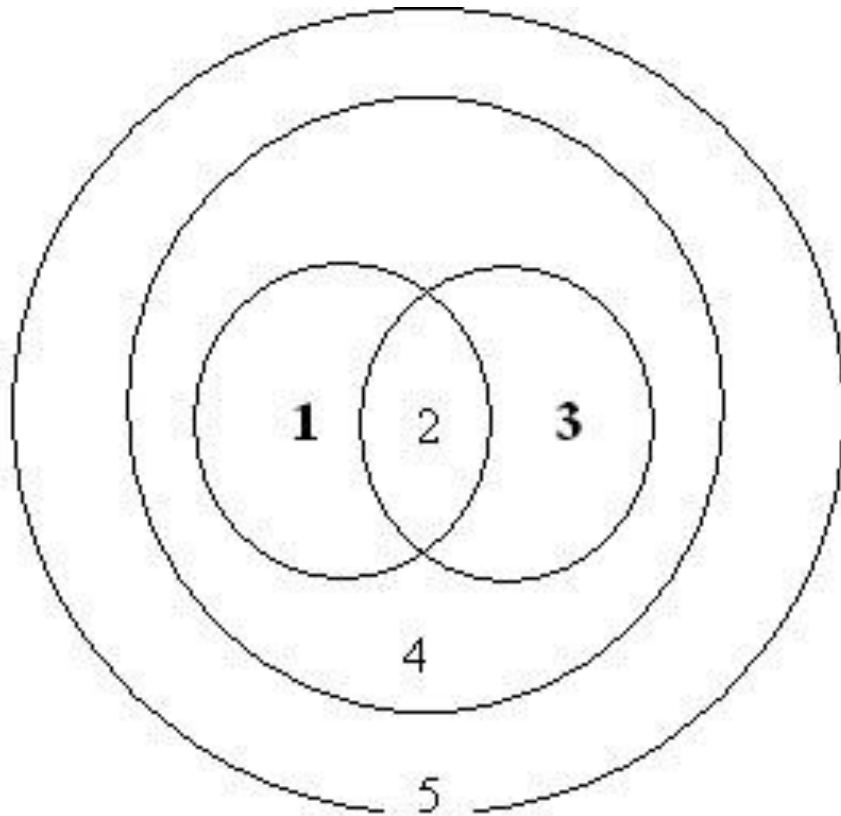
(Figure is adapted from Weaver, 1988: page 30. 1. Reader;
2. Transaction;
3. Text;
4. Immediate Situational Contexts and
5. Broader Socio Linguistic Contexts.)

14.4. Two Kinds of Processing in Reading : Bottom up and Top down

Bottom up processes are those that take in stimuli from the outside world-letters and words, for reading and deal with that information with little recourse to higher-level knowledge.

With **top down** processes the information is guided by an individual's prior knowledge and expectations.

Teriman (2001) says that in most situations, bottom up and top down processes work together to ensure the accurate and rapid processing of information.

14.5. Reading and Reading Skill

Reading in general is ability. The reader decodes meaning from the printed or written words. In the process of reading, the reader employs his reading skill. The degree of reading skill varies from person to person according to the linguistic competence and background knowledge he possesses. However, the following are some of the important components of reading skill.

❖ Recognition of the graphemes.
❖ Recognition of the correlation of graphemes within words.
❖ Recognizing word boundaries and sentence boundary.
❖ Recognizing the meaning of words and its relationship in sentence.
❖ Recognizing relationship between and among sentences in a discourse.

❖ Deducing meaning of unfamiliar words
❖ Inferring implicit and explicit information and ideas of text, etc.

14.6. Qualities of an Effective Reader

When a person reads, his capability as a reader can be judged by his efficiency of reading, which depends upon his linguistic competence, background knowledge about the subject and the words used in the text.

A successful reader can easily manage large amount of written material. The following are the characteristics of a successful or effective reader (Berg, 1971:7-8). A reader is one who

· has purpose
· can concentrate
· comprehend what he reads
· remembers what he reads
· has a good vocabulary, and
· can read rapidly, but with rate depending on the material.

Further, Berg says that knowing how to select the right combination of skills for a particular purpose - to change the rate of reading in a co-ordinated reaction to purpose and difficulty is the mark of the effective reader. This skill is called flexibility.

The flexible reader is a purposeful reader. He knows how to skim for previewing an article before reading, and he knows how to scan for specific information in a selection. He learns from his preview skimming, to know whether to read the selection rapidly, at an average rate, or slowly.

This way the reading task gets completed

14.7. Types of Reading

Yoakem (1955) has classified reading according to the form, purpose and the psychological process involved.Reading may be of many types:
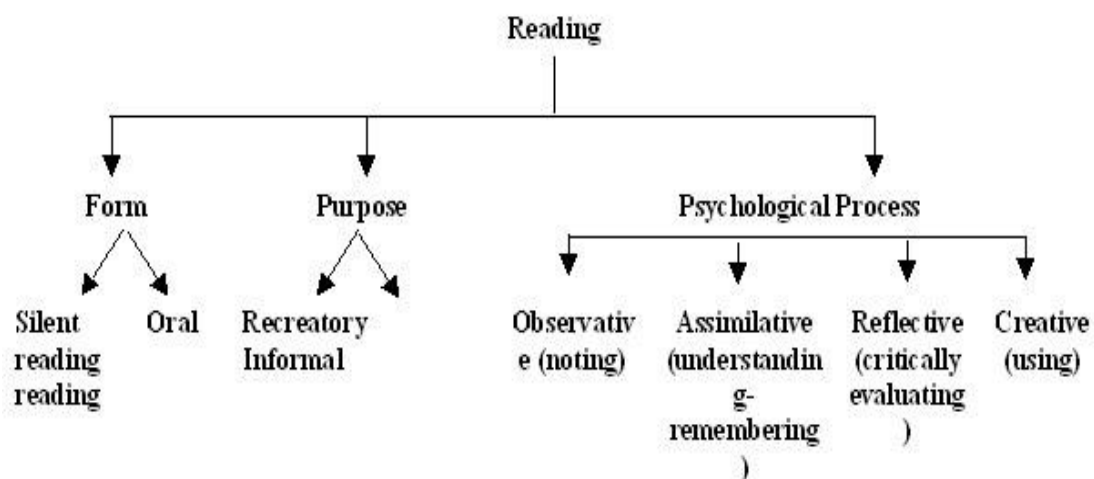
Oral and silent reading: On the basis of 'form', reading is categorized as silent and oral reading. The reader either reads to himself or to others
Informational reading: reading to provide information or to get information
Recreational reading: reading for entertainment and time pass.
Observational: where the reader makes note of what the writer intends to write but makes no special efforts to analyse it or to remember the words or ideas.
Assimilative: where the reader tries to understand fully and remember what he reads.
Reflective : where the reader reads with a critical attitude.
Creative readings: where the reader tries to discover ideas so that he can use them subsequently in oral written expression.

Skimming: Skimming involves quickly running one's eye over at text to get the risk of it.
Scanning : Scanning involves quickly going through a text to find a particular piece of information.
Extensive reading is nothing but reading longer text usually for one's own pleasure. This is a fluent activity, mainly involving global understanding.
Intensive reading involves reading shorter texts to extracts specific information. This kind of reading is otherwise known as reading for details.

Reading

Form → Silent reading reading, Oral

Purpose → Recreatory Informal

Psychological Process → Observative (noting), Assimilative (understanding-remembering), Reflective (critically evaluating), Creative (using)

14.8 Five Stages of Learning Reading

❖ At the first stage, the learner learns to read the alphabetic orders ABC upto XYZ.

❖ Then he learns to read its combinations (like h.e, s.h.e).

- ❖ In the third stage, the learner learns to read the words and its combinations with other words in a sentence and understand its meaning.

- ❖ In the fourth stage he extent his reading ability at the sentence level.

- ❖ In the fifth stage, he begins to comprehend the discourses. Only at this stage, he uses his both linguistic and socio linguistic knowledge for complete understanding of the text.

14.9: Methods of Teaching Reading :The learning of reading is a conscious process which is taught to learn deliberately. However, reading is taught by adopting different methods in school curriculum which are categorized (Yadov, 2002) as:

- ❖ alphabetic method

- ❖ syllabic method

- ❖ word method

- ❖ phrase method

- ❖ sentence method

- ❖ story method and

- ❖ phonic method.

In alphabetic method, the name of the letters are taught to the students in alphabetic order and then combination of two or more letters and words combination in sentences. In the syllabic method, the unit of teaching is the syllable not the letter. Syllables are used directly and words and sentences are framed combining syllables. In word method, word is the unit of teaching and as well in phrase method, phrase is the unit of teaching. In sentence method, sentence is the unit of teaching. In story method, the students are taught story in four or five sentences which are illustrated

with pictures. The story is learnt by rote and then the students reads it. The students recognize sentences and then words. The last one, the phonic method, this method is based on phonology and is used in combination with the alphabetic method.

14.10. Causes of the Poor Reading

Reading is an important way of gaining information in language learning and it is a basic skill for a language learner. There are a lot of reading exercises in an examination today. But all these readings must be done in limited time. So learners are asked to read them correctly and with a certain speed. For instance, someone reads word by word. Someone reads with his finger pointing to the words or with his head shaking. Those are all bad habits. They should read phrase by phrase. Do not blink eyes so often and shake head. Just move the eyeball. That is enough. If they want to get more word information, there must be a proper distance between their eyes and the reading material.

One's reading capacity normally fails due to his inability of recognizing words and deducing its meanings. Apart from word recognition, the knowledge about the subject of the written matter also controls the reading ability of the reader. Berg (1971: 5-7) says that the following are the causes of poor reading habits:

- ❖ · lack of effective techniques
- ❖ · lack of effective practice
- ❖ · not a direct translation between word symbol and comprehension; word is compared to one in the more common spoken language
- ❖ · insufficient background
- ❖ · technical details which demand a slower reading and

- ❖ · visual problems.
- ❖ sounds of letters.
- ❖

14.11. Reading Comprehension

Reading means reading with comprehension. In the process of reading comprehension, the printed words are not just decoded as it is, but a reader using his linguistic competence, socio linguistic and existing knowledge about the topic decodes it. Reading is not only the activity of merely decoding the writer's meaning, but also it is the activity of more than that. That is, sometimes the reader goes beyond that or understands nothing from that.

It is the fact that how one comprehends can be decided by the internal and external factors.

Internal factors

Linguistic competence (what the reader knows about the language)
Motivation (how much the reader cares about the task at hand as his general mood about reading),
Schooling and accumulated reading ability,
How well the reader can read

External factors

The printed page

The qualities on the reading environment	
Text readability and text organization	
Teacher activity	

14.12 Testing Reading Comprehension

Reading is the receptive skill in the written mode. It can develop independently of listening and speaking skills, but often develops along with them, especially in societies with a highly developed literary tradition. Reading can help build vocabulary that helps listening comprehension at the later stages, particularly.

To test the reading comprehension of a student following activities can be adopted

- ❖ selection of appropriate answers from the given answers,
- ❖ deciding the statements given are true or false,
- ❖ getting the answers from the text.

Knowledge based questions required the subjects to recognize the parts of the sentences, to complete the incomplete sentences and recalling vocabularies and grammatical information from their memory.

Test item	Type of the Text	Mode of answering or questions	Type of skill
1.	Incomplete	Complete the sentences by	Competence based

	sentences	using the options given	
2.	Passages narrative	True / false	Text based
3.	Matching table	Match these parts of sentences to make complete sense.	Competence based
4.	Word	Choose the correct synonym	Competence based
5.	Word	Fill in the blanks with the correct word choosing from the options given within brackets	Competence based
6.	Sentence	Pickout the segment that has error in the given sentences	Competence based
7.	Telegram	Choosing the options given	Text based
8.	Sentence	Labelling the parts of the sentences	Competence based
9.	Passage	Choosing the options given	Text based
10.	Pie graph	Choosing the answers given	Text based

14.13. Remedies

The following remedies will be helpful for the enhancement of reading comprehension of the Second Language Learners.

❖ Practice of differentiating the lexical and grammatical items, recognition of unfamiliar words and understanding of their literal and contextual meanings

with the help of the teacher or dictionary will enhance the reading comprehensibility.

❖ Practice of labeling parts of speech and recognizing the word boundaries and tense markers will develop the linguistic competence of the students. Further, that will be helpful for enhancing the understanding ability of texts.

❖ Easy and simple vocabularies may be used in reading materials. Further, the hard and unknown vocabularies may be introduced in familiar context of the students. If it is unfamiliar context, both the context and vocabularies and hard words give them trouble. So, the use of unknown and hard words in a familiar context of the students will increase the understanding ability of the students.

❖ Teaching of reading comprehension, has to be done. That is, how to read, how to understand a text and how to understand a contextual meaning as well as literal meaning of words will increase the reading ability of the students.

❖ The reading games may be introduced in classroom. That is, finding phrasal verbs, differentiating the mono, die and tri syllable words, differentiating the nouns like common, abstract, animate, inanimate, etc. and the verbs like transitive and intransitive in sentence or discourse will be helpful for the development of linguistic competence which will enhance the reading comprehensibility of students.

❖ In order to make reading an interesting challenge as opposed to a tedious chore, it is important that learners do not work hard over every word, whether they are skimming the text for general meaning or scanning it to pick out specific information.

❖ As with listening activities, it is important to spend time preparing for the task by using the illustrations (a usual feature in reading activities for children), learner's own knowledge about the subject matter, and key vocabulary to help the pupils to predict the general content of the text.

❖ Discuss the subject and ask questions to elicit language and to stimulate the learner's interest in the text before they begin reading. Also make sure that the learners understand the essential vocabulary they need to complete the task before they begin to read.

❖ Do not encourage learners to read texts aloud unless this is to learn a play or recite a poem. Reading aloud inhibits ELLs and forces them to concentrate on what they are saying as opposed to what they are reading and the meaning is very often lost.

14.14 :Summing Up

It is concluded that the use of phrasal verbs, hard words, complex sentences, lengthy sentences, unknown contexts, etc. in the reading materials of the students hinders the students in understanding the concepts of reading materials.

So, it can be concluded that the parental education and economical position and the medium of instruction significantly contribute to the learning achievement of the students especially in second language learning. However, the gender and geographical location have less influence over the process of learning reading comprehension of the students.