

LEARN TO READ AND READ TO LEARN

Ms. S. Subha

Assistant Professor

M.Kumarasamy College of Engineering (Autonomous),
Karur, Tamil Nadu

Abstract

Reading is the receptive skill in the written mode. The art of reading is a great part of acquiring a better understanding of life. Reading is a starting step of many things and is an essential part of language instruction by reading one can expose to new things, new information, new ways to solve a problem, and new ways to achieve one thing. Many people have trouble with reading. Reading is hard for some people and it can take time. Reading is an important part of learning English. It also increases the understanding the rules of life, in order to adapt, adopt and accommodate into the society better.

Key Word: Reading, receptive skill, learning

INTRODUCTION

English is an International language. The English language, which takes its name from its origins as the native tongue of the people of England, is today the most widely spoken language in the world. English is undergoing a process of radical change, which will eventually lead to fragmentation into a “family language’. English is the medium of a great deal of the world’s knowledge, especially in such areas as science and technology and access to knowledge is the business of education. When we investigate why so many nations in recent years have made English as an official language or chosen it as their chief foreign language in schools, the most important reason is always education. English has become the normal medium of instruction in higher education for many countries including several countries where the language has no official status. The English language teaching (ELT) business has become one of the major growing industries around the world in the past half century. On the other hand, the English is an important requirement in most government jobs. It is quiet clear that English has become a necessity today. We need it in different fields of life. English is spoken as a first language by a majority of the inhabitants of several nations. A nation feels handicapped if it requires to make use of more than one language for official purpose.

English is considered as a tool of civilization. English in India is used in various domains. It plays an important role in administration, education, and mass media. The role of English in India has changed after the Independence of the country. In India, there are 1652 languages. Not

everyone is familiar with all languages. Only the Communication takes place as the international languages. English language plays a vital role in education. English has become the medium in all schools and colleges. English is the second language in India. In India, the well-known and common language is English. English is the only language, which is used in all the fields such as Business, Education, Media, Politics, Economics, Commerce, Accounts, Press, etc., English is regarded as a ‘natural’ language for wider communication and the language of technology, modernity and development. English is also a social status symbol. English is available to us as a historical heritage in addition to our own language. We must make the best use of English to develop ourselves culturally and materially so, that we can compete with the best in the world of mind and matter. English language is our window to the world.

ENGLISH TEACHING IN INDIA

Among the language used in India, English occupies a dignified but delicate position. English in India is used in various domains. It plays an important role in administration, education and mass media. It works as a link language within India and also between foreign countries. English has been rightly described as a gateway of world culture. It is also described a pipe-line for the stream of knowledge in all branches of learning. In India, there is no doubt that English of late has lost a good deal of its importance as a subject for school teaching. It has no longer the same exotic and compelling charm that during the British rule. English in India is taught in different types of schools, and in various states, in a number of ways and circumstances called public schools.

TEACHING OF ENGLISH AS COMMUNICATION.

Students who have received several years of formal English teaching remain deficient in the ability to use the language and communication in the spoken or written mod, the reason for this sorry state of affairs is that the elementary and secondary school teaching are not doing their job properly. They do not follow the approach of English teaching which is taught to them in training colleges, in service courses, refresher courses, summer courses and which is embodied in the prescribed text books. If the teachers put this approach into practice the problem would disappear”.

READING SKILLS

Reading is essential for each and everyone. All too often, the barriers faced by the learners with difficulty reading outweigh their desire to read and, without proper guidance, they never overcome them.

Learning to read is a sequential process; each new skill builds on the mastery of previously learned skills. Early on, for example, children learn to break down words into their most basic sounds in a process called decoding. Later, they begin to comprehend the meaning of words, sentences and, ultimately, entire passages of text.

BENEFITS OF READING

- Increase one’s Vocabulary
- Exercise for Brain
- Widens Knowledge power
- Reduce Stress
- Flex one’s Imagination

IMPORTANCE OF READING

Reading and understanding is a relationship between the conscious and the subconscious phases of mind, like the mother and the child. “Reading without reflecting” said Edmund Burke, “ is like eating without digesting” .Eating is a conscious process while digesting is a subconscious, autonomous process.

In modern day context, good reading habits help to keep abreast of the latest developments and ideas in our fields of interest. It helps the people to gain confidence in discussing certain current affairs freely among friends and business associates. Reading skills is a sure sign of every educated person. Reading is a digestive process. The objective of reading is a fulfillment of our needs. The needs could be:

- To receive useful information from the writer
- To inspire ourselves
- To learn to perform something
- To persuade ourselves

USES OF READING

- Reading for details
- Reading to evaluate or criticize
- Reading to follow directions
- Reading to organize
- Reading to determine relationship
- Reading for implied meanings
- Reading to form sensory impressions
- Reading maps, graphs, charts, tables, and so forth.

SKILLS INVOLVED IN READING

Reading ability is determined by many factors, and requires the development of certain skills through early reading instruction to attain initial success and build on it.

- Recognize vocabulary
- Pick out key words, such as those identifying topics and main ideas.
- Figure out the meaning of the words, including unfamiliar vocabulary, from the (written) context.
- Recognize grammatical word classes: noun, adjective, etc.,
- Detect sentence constituents, such as subject, verb, object, propositions, etc.,
- Recognize basic syntactic patterns.
- Get the main points or the most important information.
- Use both knowledge of the world and lexical and grammatical cohesive
- Adjust reading strategies to different reading processes, such as skimming for main ideas or studying in-depth

INCREASING THE READING SPEED

It is more important to improve the reading skills than reading speed. Being focused and selective in reading habits will reduce the time spend for reading. If, in addition to using a range

of reading skills one want to increase their reading speed, then the following technique will be of use.

The average reading speed is about 240-300 words per minute. For the average reader, the eye fixes on each word individually. It is easy for your eye to recognize 4 or 5 words in a single fixation without a loss of understanding.

The key to increasing the reading speed is not to increase the speed at which your eyes move across the page, but to increase the word span for a single fixation. A simple way of developing the habit of taking in more than one word per fixation is to take a page of text and divide it length ways into three with two lines drawn down the page. Using a pen or pencil as a pointer, read each line of text by allowing your eye to fall only in the middle of each of the three sections, as indicated by your pointer.

TECHNIQUES TO MAKE READING ACTIVE

- Underline or highlight key words and phrases as read. When return to it later on, one can easily see which points is identified as important. Be selective - too much highlighting won't help.
- Make annotations in the margin to summaries points, raise questions, and challenge what read, jot down examples and so on. One can do this in printed books .This takes more thought than highlighting, so one can probably remember the content better.
- Read critically by asking questions of the text. Who wrote it? When? Who is the intended audience? Does it link with other material you've studied in the module? Why do you think it was written? Is it an excerpt from a longer piece of text?
- Test by reading for half an hour, putting the text away and jotting down the key points from memory. Go back to the text to fill in gaps.

RE-READING

Rereading is reading a book more than once. “One cannot read a book: one can only reread it,” Vladimir Nabokov once said. A paper published in the Journal of Consumer Research (Cristel Antonia (2012)) found re-reading offers mental health benefits because it allows for a more profound emotional connection and self-reflection. The method of repeated reading was developed to help non-fluent readers improve fluency and, ultimately, reading comprehension and to improve phonological aspects. Initially, repeated reading for students with reading and learning disabilities was designed as a one-to-one clinical intervention (Heckelman, 1969; Samuels, 1979).

Non-fluent readers typically read in a piece-by-piece, word-by-word manner and are slower and less accurate than fluent readers in decoding. With such inadequate reading patterns, non-fluent readers typically fall behind their peers and do not find enjoyment in reading. Moreover, because their reading is laborious, understanding of text is hampered. With successive readings, the reading would become more expressive, fluid, and animated to achieve greater fluency and to promote greater comprehension and enjoyment.

- Repeated Reading is a group or individual activity, where the learners
 - Read a text with a fluent, and then reader
 - Read the text alone until they can read it as fast as the fluent reader does
- Repeating a passage until they can read it quickly helps readers develop
 - Confidence

- Speed
- comprehension
- Correct pronunciation and
- Word production ability
- ❖ Here are the steps to follow to use repeated reading
 - Have the learners read along with
 - ✓ a fluent reader, or
 - ✓ a cassette tape of a fluent reader'
 - Give the learner a time goal which is the same length of time it would take a fluent reader to read the passage at a moderate pace.
 - Have the learners read the same passage alone until they are able to read the passage in the specified time.
 - When the time goal is reached, repeat the process with a new passage.

CONCLUSION

Reading exposes one to a world of imagination. Read as many English books, newspapers and magazines which will improve the minds. To improve the reading skills one needs to have clear reading goals, choosing the right texts, using the right reading style and to use note-taking techniques. These reading goals can significantly increase the reading efficiency. Communication is the most important tool which can be transmitted through reading. As one communicates through reading, one understands more, and thus one can communicate better with people. Reading is a multifaceted process that develops only with practice. So the more you read, the more you understand.

Workcited

- Elkonin, D. B. (1973) In: J. Downing (Ed.), *Comparative reading*. New York: Macmillan, 1973: 551-579.
- Hatcher, P.J. (1994) *Sound Linkage (An Integrated Programme for Overcoming Reading Difficulties)* England: Whurr Publishers.
- McKenna, M.C. and Stahl, K. A. D. (2009) *Assessment for Reading Instruction (2nd ed.)*. New York: Guilford.
- Pearson, P.D. & Gallagher, M.C. (1983). The instruction of reading comprehension. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 8, 317-344.
- Jack. C. Richards, *The context of language teaching* (Vol. XI). 1985, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.