TEACHING THE RECEPTIVE SKILLS
Listening & Reading Skills
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Teaching English Language Skills

Language instruction includes four important skills. These skills are Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. The main reason for isolating these skills and discussing them separately is to highlight their importance and to impress upon the teachers to place emphasis on their teaching and deal with them in a balanced way. Some language skills are neglected during the classroom practice and hence they are given insufficient and inadequate exposure; Research shows that listening and speaking are nearly neglected and not well recognized by most EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia. These skills are largely considered as passive skills.

Language skills are divided into receptive and productive ones. The receptive skills include listening and reading while the productive ones are speaking and writing. Language skills could also be divided into aural and graphic ones. The aural skills deal with listening and speaking ability while the graphic skills focus on reading and writing (see figure 1). Extensive exposure to receptive skills leads to the productive one. Wilkins (1984: 100) maintains that "the transfer of linguistic knowledge from receptive to productive is probably a relatively slow process, but it does take place, as the study of language acquisition shows." Hence, a rich exposure to listening and reading is required to attain mastery and proficiency in natural production.

Figure (1): differences between the aural and graphic skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Speech</th>
<th>Writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sound is the medium. We use the speech organs (mouth, throat) and ears in speaking and listening.</td>
<td>Words on a page or screen is the medium. We use our hands to write and our eyes to read.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>Paralinguistic features, e.g. pause, loudness, stress, intonation, etc. and extralinguistic features, e.g. gestures, facial expressions, eye contact, nods, body posture, etc. used to aid communication.</td>
<td>Only words on the page and punctuation marks available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Processing time</td>
<td>Thinking, speaking and listening go on at almost the same time. If the listener fails to understand what the speaker says at the time the speaker says it, he will not get another chance to listen to it again. Speech is ephemeral.</td>
<td>The writer can take his time in composing and the reader can take his time reading and re-reading what is written. Writing is permanent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback</td>
<td>The speaker can find out the listeners' response to what he said almost instantly.</td>
<td>Delayed feedback. The writer has to wait until he gets a reply to his letter or review of his ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Usually simple sentences and vocabulary used.</td>
<td>More sophisticated and complex structures and vocabulary used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>More meandering and fewer organizational markers, especially in spontaneous speech, e.g. conversation.</td>
<td>Usually well-organized because more time for planning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance</td>
<td>Many false starts, fillers, pauses, etc. found.</td>
<td>Editing. Therefore no 'mistakes' visible.</td>
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Part I: Teaching the Receptive Skills

Receptive skills are the ways in which people extract meaning from the discourse they see or hear. There are generalities about this kind of processing which apply to both reading and listening - and which will be addressed in this chapter - but there are also significant differences between reading and listening processes too, and in the ways we can teach these skills in the classroom.

How we read and listen

When we read a story or a newspaper, listen to the news, or take part in conversation we employ our previous knowledge as we approach the process of comprehension, and we deploy a range of receptive skills; which ones we use will be determined by our reading or listening purpose.

What a reader will bring to understand a piece of discourse is much more than just knowing the language. In order to make sense of any text we need to have 'pre-existent knowledge of the world' (Cook 1989: 69). Such knowledge is often referred to as schema (plural schemata). Each of us carries in our heads mental representations of typical situations that we come across. When we are stimulated by particular words, discourse patterns, or contexts, such schematic knowledge is activated and we are able to recognise what we see or hear because it fits into patterns that we already know. As Chris Tribble points out, we recognise a letter of rejection or a letter offering a job within the first couple of lines (Tribble 1997: 35).

have to work doubly hard to understand what they see or hear. When we see a written text our schematic knowledge may first tell us what kind of text genre we are dealing with. Thus if we recognise an extract as coming from a novel we will have expectations about the kind of text we are going to read. These will be different from the expectations aroused if we recognise a piece of text as coming from an instruction manual. Knowing what kind of a text we are dealing with allows us to predict the form it may take at the text: paragraph, and sentence level. Key words and phrases alert us to the subject of a text, and this again allows us, as we read, to predict what is coming next. In conversation knowledge of typical interactions helps participants to communicate efficiently. As the conversation continues, the speakers and listeners draw upon various schemata - including genre, topic, discourse patterning, and the use of specific language features - to help them make sense of what they are hearing. As with readers, such schemata arouse expectations which allow listeners to predict what will happen in the conversation. Such predictions give the interaction a far greater chance of success than if the participants did not have such pre-existing knowledge to draw upon.

Shared schemata make spoken and written communication efficient. Without the right kind of pre-existing knowledge, comprehension becomes much more difficult. And that is the problem for some foreign language learners who, because they have a different shared knowledge of cultural reference and discourse patterning in their own language and culture from that in the English variety they are dealing with, have to work doubly hard to understand what they see or hear.

Top-down and bottom-up

A frequent distinction is made - especially in the analysis of reading - between top-down and bottom-up processing. In metaphorical terms this can be likened to the difference between looking down on something from above - getting an overview and, on the contrary, being in the middle of something and understanding where we are by concentrating on all the individual features. It is the difference between looking at a forest, or studying the individual trees within it.

It has been said that in top-down processing the reader or listener gets a general view of the reading or listening passage by, in some way, absorbing the overall picture: This is greatly helped if the reader or listener's schemata allow them to have appropriate expectations of what they are going to come across. In bottom-up processing, on the other hand, the reader or listener focuses on individual words and phrases, and achieves understanding by stringing these detailed elements together to build up a whole.

It is probably most useful to see acts of reading and listening as interactions between top-down and bottom-up processing. Sometimes it is the individual details that help us understand the whole; sometimes it is our overview that allows us to process the details. Without a good understanding of a reasonable proportion of the details gained through some bottom-up processing we will be unable to get any clear general picture of what the text is about. A non-scientist attempting to read a specialist science journal finds this to be the case almost immediately. A person listening to a conversation in a foreign language with many words he or she does not know finds bottom-up and top-down processing almost impossible.

Reasons for reading and listening

When we read a sign on the motorway our motives are different from when we read a detective novel; when we take an audiotape guide round a museum we have a different purpose in mind from when we listen to a stranger giving us directions on a street corner. We can divide reasons for reading and listening into two broad categories:

1 For maintaining good social relations

We often hear people say they spent a whole afternoon or whole weekend chatting with someone else but when they are asked what they talked about, they say things like, 'Nothing much!' or 'I can't really remember.' In this kind of talk, the information content or message is not important. What is important is the
goodwill that is maintained or established through the talk. The communication here is listener-oriented and not message-oriented. A great deal of conversation and casual talk is of this nature.

2 For entertainment
People listen to jokes, stories, songs, plays, TV; radio broadcasts, etc. mainly for entertainment. The outcome of such listening is not usually measured in terms of how useful it was but in terms of personal satisfaction.

3 For obtaining information necessary for day-to-day living
A large amount of reading and listening takes place because it will help us to achieve some clear aim. Thus, for example, we read a road sign so that we know where to go. People listen to news broadcasts, directions on how to get to different places, weather forecasts and travel: information-airport, bus- and train terminal announcements—because listening to these enables them to get the information necessary for day-to-day living: to know when to board the plane, whether it is 'safe' to plan a picnic, etc.

4 For academic purposes
People listen to lectures, seminars and talks as a way of extending their knowledge and skills. Listening is a central part of all learning. A pupil who cannot understand what the teacher is saying in a class is seriously hampered in his learning.

Different sub-skills of listening and reading
The processes we go through when reading a novel or listening to a poem are likely to be different from those we use when we are looking for someone's number in a telephone directory, or when we are listening to a spoken 'alert' message on a computer. Our use of these different skills will frequently depend on what we are reading or listening for.

- **Identifying the topic:** good readers and listeners are able to pick up the topic of a written or spoken text very quickly. With the help of their own schemata they quickly get an idea of what is being talked about. This ability allows them to process the text more effectively as it progresses.

- **Predicting and guessing:** both readers and listeners sometimes guess in order to try and understand what is being written or talked about, especially if they have first identified the topic. Sometimes they look forward, trying to predict what is coming; sometimes they make assumptions or guess the content from their initial glance or half-hearing - as they try and apply their schemata to what is in front of them. Their subsequent reading and listening helps them to confirm their expectations of what they have predicted or to readjust what they thought was going to happen in the Light of experience.

- **Reading and listening for general understanding:** good readers and listeners are able to take in a stream of discourse and understand the gist of it without worrying too much about the details. Reading and listening for such 'general' comprehension means not stopping for every word, not analysing everything that the writer or speaker includes in the text. A term commonly used in discussions about reading is skimming (which means running your eyes over a text to get a quick idea of the gist of a text). By encouraging students to have a quick look at the text before plunging into it for detail, we help them to get a general understanding of what it is all about. This will help them when and if they read for more specific information. Gist reading and listening are not 'lazy' options. The reader or listener has made a choice not to attend to every detail, but to use their processing powers to get more of a top-down view of what is going on.

- **Reading and listening for specific information:** in contrast to reading and listening for gist, we frequently go to written and spoken text because we want specific details; we may listen to the news, only concentrating when the particular item that interests us comes up. We may quickly look through a film review to find the name of the director or the star. In both cases we almost ignore all the other information until we come to the specific item we are looking for. In discussions about reading this skill is frequently referred to as scanning.

- **Reading and listening for detailed information:** sometimes we read and listen in order to understand everything we are reading in detail. This is usually the case with written instructions or directions, or with the description of scientific procedures; it happens when someone gives us their address and telephone number and we write down all the details. If we are in an airport and an announcement starts with *Here is an announcement for passengers on flight AA671 to Lima* (and if that is where we are going), we listen in a concentrated way to everything that is said.

- **Interpreting text:** readers and listeners are able to see beyond the literal meaning of words in a passage, using a variety of clues to understand what the writer or speaker is implying or suggesting. Successful interpretation of this kind depends to a large extent on shared schemata as in the example of the lecturer who, by saying to a student *You're in a non-smoking zone* was understood to be asking the student to put her cigarette out. We get a lot more from a reading suggest because, as active participants, we use our schemata together with our knowledge of the world to expand the pictures we have been given, and to fill in the gaps which the writer or speaker seems to have left. or listening text than the words alone.
Problems and solutions

The teaching and learning of receptive skills presents a number of particular, problems which will need to be addressed. These are to do-with language, topic, the tasks students are asked to perform, and the expectations they have of reading and listening, as we shall discuss below.

1- Language

What is it that makes a text difficult? In the case of written text some researchers look at word and sentence-length (Wallace-1992: 7), on the premise that texts with longer sentences and longer words will be more difficult to understand than those with shorter ones. Others, however, claim that the critical issue is quite simply the number of unfamiliar words which the text contains. If readers and listeners do not know all the words in a text, they will have great difficulty in understanding the text as a whole. To be successful they have to recognize a high potion of the vocabulary without consciously thinking about it (Paran 1996). It is clear that both sentence length and the percentage of unknown words both play their part in a text's comprehensibility.

When students who are engaged in listening encounter unknown lexis it can be 'like a dropped barrier causing them to stop and think about the meaning of a word and thus making them miss the next part of the speech’ (Underwood 1989:17). Unlike reading, there may be no opportunity to go back and listen to the lexis again. Comprehension is gradually degraded, therefore, and unless the listener is able to latch on to a new element to help them back into the flow of what is being said the danger is that they will lose heart and gradually disengage from the receptive task since it is just too difficult.

Apart from the obvious point that the more language we expose students to the more they will learn, there are specific ways of addressing the problem of language difficulty: pre-teaching vocabulary, using extensive reading listening, and considering alternatives to authentic language.

- Pre-teaching vocabulary: one way of helping students is to pre-teach vocabulary that is in the reading or listening text. This removes at least some of the barriers to understanding which they are likely to encounter. However, if we want to give students practice in what it is like to tackle authentic reading and listening texts for general understanding then getting past words they do not understand is one of the skills they need to develop. By giving them some or all of those words we deny them that chance. We need a common-sense solution to this dilemma. Where students are likely to be held back unnecessarily because of three or four words, it makes sense to teach them first. Where they should be able to comprehend the text despite some unknown words, we can leave vocabulary work till later.

An appropriate compromise is to use some (possibly unknown) words from a reading or listening text as part of our procedure to create interest and activate the students' schemata, since the words may suggest topic, genre, or construction - or all three. The students can first research the meanings of words and phrases and then predict what a text with such words is likely to be about.

- Extensive reading and listening: most researchers like to make a difference between 'extensive' and 'intensive' reading and listening. Look at the differences in the next section.

The benefits of extensive reading are echoed by the benefits for extensive listening: the more students listen, the more language they acquire, and the better they get at listening activities in general. Whether they choose passages from textbooks, recordings of simplified readers, listening material designed for their level, or recordings of radio programmes which they are capable of following, the effect will be the same. Provided the input is comprehensible they will gradually acquire more words and greater schematic knowledge which will, in turn, resolve many of the language difficulties they started out with.

- Authenticity: because it is vital for students to get practice in dealing with written text and speech where they miss quite a few words but are still able to extract the general meaning, an argument can be made for using mainly authentic reading and listening texts in class. After all, it is when students come into contact with 'real' language that they have to work hardest to understand.

Authentic material is language where no concessions are made to foreign speakers. It is normal, natural language used by native - or competent - speakers of a language. This is what our students encounter (or will encounter) in real life if they come into contact with target-language speakers, and, precisely because it is authentic, it is unlikely to be simplified, spoken slowly, or to be full of simplistic content (as some textbook language has a tendency to be). Authentic material which has been carelessly chosen can be extremely de-motivating for students since they will not understand it. Instead of encouraging such failure, therefore, we should let students read and listen to things they can understand. For beginners this may mean roughly tuned language from the teacher and specially designed reading and listening texts from materials writers. However, it is essential that such listening texts approximate to authentic language use. The language may be simplified, but it must not be unnatural.

It is worth pointing out that deciding what is or is not authentic is not easy. The language which students are exposed to has just as strong claim to authenticity as the play or the parent, provided that it is not
altered in such a way as to make it unrecognisable in style and construction from the language which native speakers encounter in many walks of life.

2- Topic and genre

Many receptive skill activities prove less successful than anticipated because the topic is not appropriate or because students are not familiar with the genre they are dealing with. If students are not interested in a topic, or if they are unfamiliar with the text genre we are asking them to work on, they may be reluctant to engage fully with the activity. Their lack of engagement or schematic knowledge may be a major hindrance to successful reading or listening. To resolve such problems we need to think about how we choose and use topics, and how we approach different reading and speaking genres:

- **Choose the right topics:** we should try and choose topics which our students will be interested in. We can find this out by questionnaires, interviews, or by the reactions of students in both current and previous classes to various activities and topics we have used. However, individual students have individual interests, so that it is unlikely that all members of a class will be interested in the same things. For this reason we need to include a variety of topics across a series of lessons so that all our students’ interests will be catered for in the end.

- **Create interest:** if we can get the students engaged in the task there is a much better chance that they will read or listen with commitment and concentration, whether or not they were interested in the topic to start with. We can get students engaged by talking about the topic, by showing a picture for prediction, by asking them to guess what they are going to see or hear on the basis of a few words or phrases from the text, or by having them look at headlines or captions before they read the whole thing. Perhaps we will show them a picture of someone famous and get them to say if they know anything about that person before they read a text about them or hear them talking.

- **Activate schemata:** in the same way we create interest by giving students predictive tasks and interesting activities, we want to activate their knowledge before they read or listen so that they bring their schemata to the text.

- **Vary topics and genres:** a way of countering student unfamiliarity with certain written and spoken genres is to make sure we expose them to a variety of different text types, from written instructions and taped announcements to stories in books and live, spontaneous conversation, from Internet pages to business letters, from pre-recorded messages on phone lines to radio dramas.

*In good general English course books a number of different genres are represented in both reading and listening activities. If the teacher is not following a course book, however, then it is a good idea to make a list of text genres which are relevant to the students’ needs and interests in order to be sure that they will experience an appropriate range of texts. Ensuring students’ confidence with more than one genre becomes vitally important, too, in the teaching of productive skills.*

3- Comprehension tasks

A key feature in the successful teaching of receptive skills concerns the choice of comprehension tasks. Sometimes such tasks appear to be testing the students rather than helping them to understand. Although reading and listening are perfectly proper mediums for language and skill testing, nevertheless, if we are trying to encourage students to improve their receptive skills, testing them will not be an appropriate way of accomplishing this. Sometimes texts or the tasks which accompany them are far too easy or far too difficult. In order to resolve these problems we need to use comprehension tasks which promote understanding and we need to match text and task appropriately.

- **Testing and teaching:** the best kinds of tasks are those which raise students’ expectations, help them tease out meanings, and provoke an examination of the reading or listening passage. Unlike reading and listening tests, these tasks bring them to a greater understanding of language and text construction. By having students perform activities such as looking up information on the Internet, filling in forms on the basis of a listening tape, or solving reading puzzles, we are helping them become better readers and listeners.

*Some tasks seem to fall half way between testing and teaching, however, -since-by-appearing-to-a demand right answer (for example, by asking if certain statements about the text are true or false, or by asking questions about the text with *what, when, how many, and how often*) they could, in theory, be used to assess student performance. Indeed when they are done under test conditions, their purpose is obviously to explore student strengths and weaknesses. Yet such comprehension items can also be an indispensable part of a teacher’s receptive skills armory too. By the simple expedient of having students work in pairs to agree on whether a statement about part of a text is true or false - or as a result of a discussion between the teacher and the class - the comprehension items help each individual (through conversation and comparison) to understand something, rather than challenging them to give right answers under text-like conditions. If students predict the answers to such questions before they read or listen, expectations are created in their minds to help them focus their reading or listening. In both cases we have turned a potential test task into a creative tool for receptive skill training.*
Whatever the reading task, in other words, a lot will depend on the conditions in which students are asked to perform that task. Even the most formal test-like items can be used to help students rather than frighten them!

- **Appropriate challenge:** when asking students to read and listen we want to avoid texts and tasks that are either far too easy or far too difficult. As with many other language tasks we want to get the level of challenge right, to make the tasks 'difficult but achievable' (Scrivener 1994b: 149).

Getting the level right depends on the right match between text and task. Thus, where a text is difficult, we may still be able to use it, but only if the task is appropriate. We could theoretically, for example, have beginners listen to the famous soliloquy from Shakespeare's Hamlet (*To be or not to be? /That is the question./Whether 'tis nobler ...*, etc) and ask them how many people are speaking. Yet we might feel that neither is appropriate or useful. On the other hand, having students listen to a news broadcast where the language level is very challenging, may be entirely appropriate if the task only asks them at first - to try and identify the five main topics in the broadcast.

4- **Negative expectations**

Students sometimes have low expectations of reading and listening. They can feel that they are not going to understand the passage in the book or on tape because it is bound to be too difficult, and they predict that the whole experience will be frustrating and de-motivating. Where students have low expectations of reading and listening (and of course not all students do) it will be our job to persuade them, through our actions, to change these negative expectations into realistic optimism.

- **Manufacturing success:** by getting the level of challenge right (in terms of language, text, and tasks) we can ensure that students are successful. By giving students a clear and achievable purpose, we can help them to achieve that purpose. Each time we offer them a challenging text which we help them to read or listen to successfully, we dilute the negative effect of past experiences, and create ideal conditions for future engagement.

- **Agreeing on a purpose:** it is important for teacher and students to agree on both general and specific purposes for their reading or listening. Are the students trying to discover detailed information or just get a general understanding of what something is about? Perhaps they are listening to find out the time of the next train; maybe they are reading in order to discern only whether a writer approves of the person they are describing. If students know why they are reading or listening they can choose how to approach the text. If they understand the purpose they will have a better chance of knowing how well they have achieved it.
First section: Teaching Listening

Aims of Teaching Listening

The component on listening aims at developing pupils' ability to listen to information with understanding and precision. The sub-skills of listening range from the basic level of sound, word and phrase recognition to an understanding of the whole text. The use of various text types is recommended ranging from teacher-simulated texts to media broadcasts and authentic conversations.

Pupils are encouraged to respond to the information heard in a variety of ways. These responses would comprise both verbal and non-verbal forms. By the end of the primary school, pupils should be able to listen to and respond to a number of familiar topics. Thus, the sub-skills of listening extend and develop skills of understanding the text and responding to the message in the text as well as to non-verbal cues conveyed within the communication.

Processes Involved in Listening

1 Hearing vs. listening

Our ears are constantly being barraged by sound. However, we do not pay attention to everything we hear. We only begin to 'listen' when we pay attention to the sounds we hear and make efforts to interpret them.

2 Top-down processing

When a listener hears something, this may remind him of something in his previous knowledge, and this in turns, leads him to predict the kind of information he is likely to hear. When this happens, he is said to be using 'top-down' processing. When a listener can relate what he is about to hear he already knows, this will help him understand what he hears better. This is why pre-listening activities are introduced to help students see how the listening text relates to what they already know.

3 Bottom-up processing

If what he hears does not trigger anything in the previous knowledge, then the listener would resort to what is called 'bottom up' listening, the slow building up of meaning block by block through understanding all the linguistic data he hears. This kind of processing is much hard way to solve this problem, however, is not to focus the student's attention on the 'building blocks': pronunciation, word knowledge, etc. People listen for words and sounds. They listen for meaning. So you should teach your students to list meaning: to use whatever clues they can get from the context-who is speaking, on what topic, for what purpose, to whom, where, etc. to make sense of what they hear. They should, for example, try to guess the meaning of unknown or partially heard words from the context. They should be taught to have a whole-to-part focus in their listening. They should work at understanding the whole message and to use grammar, vocabulary and sounds only as aids in doing this and not as important in themselves.

4 Listening is an active process

When a proficient listener listens, he doesn't passively receive what the speaker says. He actively constructs meaning. He identifies main points and supporting details; he distinguishes fact from opinion. He guesses the meaning of unfamiliar words. These are cognitive aspects of listening. There are also affective or emotional dimensions to listening. The listener agrees or disagrees with a speaker. Likes or dislikes the speaker's tone of voice or choice of words. He may find the speakers' choice of topic morally objectionable or absolutely boring. He may be disappointed with/surprised by/worried about satisfied with the speaker's treatment of the topic and so on. Listeners' attitudes, values and interests all affect the way they interpret and respond.

Differences Between Extensive And Intensive Listening

Students can improve their listening skills - and gain valuable language input - through a combination of extensive and intensive listening material and procedures. Listening of both kinds is especially important since it provides the perfect opportunity to hear voices other than the teacher's, enables students to acquire good peaking habits as a result of the spoken English they absorb, and helps to improve their own pronunciation.

Whereas the former suggests reading or listening at length, often for pleasure and in a leisurely way, intensive reading or listening tends to be more concentrated, less relaxed, and often dedicated not so much to pleasure as to the achievement of a study goal.

Extensive reading and listening frequently take place when students are on their own, whereas intensive reading or listening is often done with the help and/or intervention of the teacher. Extensive reading - especially where students are reading material written specially at their level - has a number of benefits for the development of a student's language. Colin Davis suggests that any classroom will be the poorer for the
lack of an extensive reading programme, and will be 'unable to promote its pupils' language development in all aspects as effectively as if such programmes were present' (1995: 335). He also claims that such a programme will make students more positive about reading, improve their overall comprehension skills, and give them a wider passive and active vocabulary. Richard Day and Julian Bamford agree that the extensive reading enables students to read without constantly stopping and provides an increased word recognition (Day and Bamford 1998). What these commentators and others are claiming is that extensive reading is the best possible way for students to develop automaticity - that is the automatic recognition of words when they see them. It is by far the best way to improve their English reading (and writing) overall.

**Extensive Listening**

Just as we can claim that extensive reading helps students to acquire vocabulary and grammar, and that, furthermore, it make students better readers, so extensive listening (where a teacher encourages students to choose for themselves what they listen to and to do so for pleasure and general language improvement) can also have a dramatic effect on a student's language learning.

Extensive listening will usually take place outside the classroom, in the students' home, car, or on personal stereos as they travel from one place to another. The motivational power of such an activity increases dramatically when students make their own choices about what they are going to listen to.

Material for extensive listening can be found from a number of sources. A lot of simplified readers are now published with an audio version on tape. These provide ideal listening material. Many students will enjoy reading and listening at the same time using both the reader and tape. Students can also have their own copies of course book tapes, or tapes which accompany other books written especially at their level. They can also listen to tapes of authentic material

In order for extensive listening to work effectively with a group of students - or with groups of students - we will need to make a collection of appropriate tapes clearly marked for level, topic, and genre. These can be kept-like simplified readers in a permanent collection (such as in a self-access centre, or in some other location), or be kept in a box or some other container which can be taken into classrooms. We will then want to keep a record of which students have borrowed which tapes; where possible we should involve students in the tasks of record-keeping.

The keenest students will want to listen to English tapes outside the classroom anyway, and will need little encouragement to do so. Many others, however, will profit from having the teacher give them reasons to make use of the resources available. We need to explain the benefits of listening extensively, and come to some kind of agreement about how much and what kind of listening they should do. We can recommend certain tapes, and get other students to talk about the ones which they have enjoyed the most.

In order to encourage extensive listening we can have students perform a number of tasks. They can record their responses to what they have heard in a personal journal, or fill in report forms which we have prepared asking them to list the topic, assess the level of difficulty, and summarise the contents of a tape. We can have them write comments on cards which are kept in a separate 'comments' box, add their responses to a large class 'listening' poster, or write comments on a student web site. The purpose of these or any other tasks is to give students more and more reasons to listen; if they can then share their information with colleagues they will feel they have contributed to the progress of the whole group. The motivational power of such feelings should not be underestimated.

**Intensive listening: using taped material**

Many teachers use taped materials, and increasingly material on disk, when they want their students to practise listening skills; this has a number of advantages and disadvantages:

- **Advantages:** taped material allows students to hear a variety of different voices apart from just their own teacher's. It gives them an opportunity to 'meet' a range of different characters, especially where real people are talking. But even when tapes contain written dialogues or extracts from plays, they offer a wide variety of situations and voices. Taped material is extremely portable and readily available. Tapes are extremely cheap, and machines to play them are relatively inexpensive. For all these reasons most course books include tapes, and many teachers rely on tapes to provide a significant source of language input.

- **Disadvantages:** in big classrooms with poor acoustics, the audibility of taped and disk material often gives cause for concern. It is often difficult to ensure that all students in a room can hear equally well. Another problem with classroom tapes is that everyone has to listen at the same speed, a speed dictated by the tape, not by the listeners. Although this replicates the situation of radio, it is less satisfactory when students have to take information from the tape. This is because they cannot, themselves, interact with the taped speakers in any way. Nor can they see the speaking taking place.

Finally, having a group of people sit around listening to a tape recorder or disk player is not an entirely natural occupation.
Despite the disadvantages, however, we still want to use taped material at various stages in a sequence of lessons for the advantages mentioned above. In order to counteract some of the potential problems described above, we need to check tape and machine quality before we take them into class. Where possible we need to change the position of the playback machine or the students to offset poor acoustics or, if this is feasible, take other measures such as using materials to deaden echoes which interfere with good sound quality.

If it is possible we can have a number of machines for students to listen to tapes or disks at their own speed, or we can take the group into the language laboratory. In order to show students what speaking looks like we can use videotapes. As an alternative to tapes we can also encourage interaction by providing 'live' listening (see below).

An issue that also needs to be addressed is how often we are going to play the tapes or disks we ask students to listen to. The methodologist Penny Ur points out that in real-life discourse is rarely 'replayed' and suggests, therefore, that one of our tasks is to encourage students to get as much information as is necessary/appropriate from a single hearing (Ur 1996: 108).

It is certainly true that extracting general or specific information from one listening is an important skill, so that the kind of task we give students for the first time they hear a tape is absolutely critical in gradually training them to listen effectively. However, we may also want to consider the fact that in face-to-face conversation we do frequently have a chance to ask for clarification and repetition.

If students are to get the maximum benefit from a listening then we should replay the tape two or more times, since with each listening they may feel more secure, and with each listening (where we are helping appropriately) they will understand more than they did previously. As the researcher John Field suggests, students get far more benefit from a lot of listening than they do from a long pre-listening phase followed by only one or two exposures to the listening text (Field 1998a). So even when we set prediction and gist tasks for first listenings, we can return to the tape again for detailed comprehension, text interpretation; or language analysis. Or we might play the tape again simply because our students want us to. Whatever the reason, however, we do not want to bore our students by playing them the same extract again and again, nor do we want to waste time on useless repetition.

### Intensive listening: 'live' listening

A popular way of ensuring genuine communication is live listening where the teacher and/or visitors to the class talk to the students. This has obvious advantages since students can interrupt speakers and ask for clarification. They can, by their expressions and demeanour, indicate if the speaker is going too slowly or too fast. Above all they can see who they are listening to. Live listening can take the following forms:

- **Reading aloud:** an enjoyable activity, when done with conviction and style, is the teacher reading aloud to a class. This allows them to hear a clear spoken version of written text, and can be extremely enjoyable if the teacher is prepared to make a big thing of it. The teacher can also read/act out dialogues either by playing two parts or by inviting a colleague into the classroom.

- **Story-telling:** teachers are ideally placed to tell stories which, in turn, provide excellent listening material. At any stage of the story, the students can be asked to predict what is coming next, or be asked to describe people in the story or pass comment on it in some other way.

- **Interviews:** one of the most motivating listening activities is the live interview, especially where students themselves dream up the questions (see Example 1 in Bl below). In such situations, students really listen for answers they themselves have asked for, rather than adopting other people's questions. Where possible we should have strangers visit our class to be interviewed, but we can also be the subject of interviews ourselves. In such circumstances we might want, though, to set the subject and/or take on a different persona for the activity.

- **Conversations:** if we can persuade a colleague to come to our class we can hold conversations with them about English or any other subject. Students then have the chance to watch the interaction as well as listen to it. We can also extend story-telling possibilities by role-playing.

**Live listening** is not a substitute for audiotapes or disks - either in the classroom, language laboratory, or self-access centre - but it does offer an extra dimension to the listening experience over a series of lessons.

### The roles of the teacher

As with all activities, for listening we need to be active in creating student engagement through the way we set up tasks. We need to build up students' confidence by helping them listen better rather than by testing their listening abilities. In particular we need to focus on the following roles:

- **Organiser:** we need to tell students exactly what their listening purpose is, and give them clear instructions about how to achieve it. One of our chief responsibilities will be to build their confidence through offering tasks that are achievable and texts that are comprehensible.

~ 10 ~
• **Machine operator:** when we use tape or disk material we "need to be as efficient as possible in the way we use the tape player. This means knowing where the segment we wish to use is on the tape or disk, and knowing, through the use of the playback machine counter, how to get back there. Above all it means trying the material out before taking it into class so that we do not waste time making things work when we get there. We should take decisions about where we can stop the extract for particular questions and exercises, but, once in class, we should be prepared to respond to the students' needs in the way we stop and start the machine. We involve our students in live listening we need to observe them with great care to see how easily they can understand us. We can then adjust the way we use the 'machine' (in this case ourselves or a visitor) accordingly.

• **Feedback organiser:** when our students have completed the task, we should lead a feedback session to check that they have completed the task successfully. We may start by having them compare their answers in pairs and then ask for answers from the class in general or from pairs in particular. Students often appreciate giving paired answers like this since, by sharing their knowledge, they are also sharing their responsibility for the answers. Because listening can be a tense experience, encouraging this kind of cooperation is highly desirable. It is important to be supportive when organising feedback after listening if we are to counter any negative expectations students might have and if we wish to sustain their motivation.

• **Prompter:** when students have listened to a tape or disk for comprehension purposes we can have them listen to it again for them to notice a variety of language and spoken features. Sometimes we can offer them script dictations (where some words in a transcript are blanked out) to provoke their awareness.

### Main Principles of teaching listening skill:

1. An EFL teacher can read orally a piece of literature such as a passage, play or poem in a natural manner. The reading [of dialogue] should sound as normal, natural, lively and meaningful as possible. This will help students to acquire the native language sounds. Gradually students will be familiar with the features and sounds of pauses, stresses, tones, rhythm and intonation.

2. An EFL teacher can play a recorded play, poem, speech prepared by native speakers with necessary pauses and fillers, false starts and idioms. This exercise proves effective and useful if it is used as part of the language laboratory program. The exercise will help train EFL learners' ears to listen to all the features of pronunciation and to recognize the elements of the target language sounds. Gradually students will be able to distinguish different sounds, stress, intonation and rhythm. The phonological code includes phone, rhythm, stress, intonation and sandhi-variation (social, regional and dialectical variations). The syntactic code encompasses word classes (affixes), and word order (stylistic variations). The semantic code contains word meaning, connotation, dialect, culture (national-ethnic), idiom-, colloquialism, false starts, pauses, fillers and redundancies. Competency is reached when a student is able to comprehend passages in the targets language without paying conscious attention to individual components.

3. An EFL teacher can ask his students to listen and imitate various aspects of pronunciation of the target language while recorded segment of actual dialogue' Rivers identifies two levels in the acquisition of target sounds, i.e., recognition and selection: E L learners who are exposed to a conversation in a lively manner for the first time hear meaningless noise. Gradually and eventually they will recognize automatically and unconsciously the phonological, syntactic and semantic codes. These features can be mastered after comprehensive exposure to the target language and conscious effort made by the EFL learners. and casual conversation is playing.

4. An EFL teacher can tell a short story about a pleasant and humorous incident that happened to him or someone else in order to provide his students with varied, interesting and self- device for listening. This variation in initiating oral materials will enhance the students' listening capability. He should make sure not to stick with the assigned material. He should try to minimize listening boredom by using a variety of listening activities.

5. An EFL teacher can use taped segments in his class from selected radio, video and television programs. The topics of these segments should include news, weather forecasts, talk shows, guessing games, interviews (of dialogue/conversation), cooking programs and dramatization. Listening to a broadcast is a useful tool to improve the students' pronunciation, intonation and tone. These topics provide exposure to live language and meaningful issues of the target language. Afterwards, he should develop several questions to measure the listening comprehension of his students. It is important that the students have some tangible record of how they are performing and progressing in listening comprehension. Live language also helps students understand a native speaker when he utters the language at normal speed in unstructured contexts and situations. Live language assures the students that the target language is manageable, functional and unrestricted for use behind the four walls of the classroom.

6. An EFL teacher can provide his students with plenty of exercises on minimal pairs to enhance their ability to differentiate sounds. In a minimal pair, i.e., a minimal contrast exercise, the teacher gives students two words in the target language which are pronounced alike except for a single distinctive sound (i.e. one phoneme). This phonemic difference leads to changes.

7. An EFL teacher can use the Auditory Memory drill to enhance students' ability to remember and repeat immediately, in sequential order what is heard. In this drill, the teacher asks his students to listen carefully to series of words or numbers, remember them and then say what they have listened to, i.e. digits, license number, phone number and address. This
activity encourages the students to listen attentively and enhances their memory to recall the data immediately.

8. An EFL teacher can give short dictations on particular topics, which might deal, for example, with numerical information, places, colours, foods, dates, and times. Passages for dictation should come in only familiar material. Dictation practice should be followed by listening and comprehension questions. The selected dictation should be, arranged from simple to difficult topics and from short to long texts. However, if the teacher selects a long paragraph from the textbook to dictate or has a large class size, he should give his students a transcript so that they can chew what they have written. Alternatively, he could let his students correct each other's dictation. Dictation should be used frequently but judiciously.

The teacher may wish to use the following procedures concerning a passage of dictation:

- Read the entire dictation at normal speed as the students listen. This helps students understand the concept and the general notion thereof.
- Repeat the passage over again with pauses to allow students to write.
- Read it at normal speed with pauses at punctuation marks and between clauses, phrases and sentences in order to give the last chance for students to check their work, fill in missing words and make changes.

Dictation exercises are excellent practice for listening comprehension. They can also be used for different purposes. Dictation can be used as a revision drill, a punctuation exercise, or a spelling test.

9. An EFL teacher can give a brief summary of the theme of oral reading passages, which gradually progresses in difficulty and length. The selected material should be relevant to the students' age and interest. In this activity the teacher can clarify the meanings of the reading passage and then read it several times at normal speed. Listening comprehension questions of the main idea of the oral reading passage are essential. Hence, it should be tested by using essay or objective questions i.e., multiple choice answers and true-false items.

10. An EFL teacher can engage his students in listening to him while giving instructions for routine classroom activities, games and tests. He can also ask his students to devote some time to listen to the instructions and then ask quick questions. Such questions could be part of revision of daily work and practice activities.

   - How are you?
   - What did you take in the previous class period?
   - What time is it now?

11. encourage his students to express themselves, ask questions, give directions; share a joke, and talk about any topic closely related to them such as personal experiences, family affairs, educational careers, funny incidents, their hobbies, relatives, friends and pets. The topic might also include hot issues, current events and cultural activities such as holidays, family parties, weddings, births and deaths, local or national news. The teacher should remain silent, nodding to show understanding without probing for additional information or facts.

12. An EFL teacher can ask his students to take part in telephone conversations with native speakers. Making phone calls can be simulated in the class. This activity can be used to inquire about a phone number, a flight arrival or departure time, schedules of TV or lecture programmes, making an appointment, and giving directions in the target language. Students should be asked to write down all the giving and receiving information via telephone. He should also refer his students to English speaking companies or agencies available in his city for gaining information and communication.

13. An EFL teacher can provide an opportunity for his students to listen to outside speakers of the target language from the community or other staff members of the school personnel. Students should be encouraged to take notes and make summaries from such lectures. Hence, he can arrange for their visits to his classroom or to the English Language Club at his school. In short, the teacher should do his utmost to take advantage of the surrounding exposure to the target language for improving the level of his students in the listening skill.

14. An EFL teacher can ask his students to conduct interviews with native speakers of the target language in the community, if it is feasible. Questions of the interviews on hobbies or special interests should be pre-developed in the class. Each student, with the assistance of the teacher, should actively participate in the construction of the questions.

Planning a Listening Lesson

Stages in a listening lesson

Generally, a listening lesson has three major stages: a pre-listening stage; a while-listening stage and a post-listening stage.

1- Pre-listening stage that

During this stage the teacher does one or more of the following things:

a. tries to rouse the student's interest in what he is about to listen;

b. makes the student actively aware of information/experiences, etc. would be useful in helping him understand what he will hear

c. does various things that help students to acquire or revise the language that would be necessary for him to understand the listening input

d. gives pupils a purpose for listening

Some common types of activities conducted in this stage
• Informal teacher talk and class discussion;
• Looking at pictures and talking about them;
• Making lists of possibilities/suggestions;
• Reading a related text;
• Reading through questions students need to answer while listening;
• Predicting outcomes;
• Previewing the language

2- While listening stage
This is the centre of focus of the lesson. The activities in this stage contain the reading points the teacher wishes to deal with in the lesson. This part may contain just one activity or it may contain a number of related or stepped activities.

**Some common types of activities conducted in this stage**
Most activity types to assess the comprehension and identification tasks are done in this section like

• Answering multiple-choice questions
• True false question
• Spotting mistakes

3- Post-listening stage
At this stage, students may be given tasks that are spin-offs of the main activity. For pie, pupils may discuss how the information/story they have listened to relates to own views on the subject (speaking) or they may be asked to write a letter to the speaker expressing a personal response to what the speaker said (writing), etc.

**Common types of post-listening activities**

• Extending lists given in the main activity from students’ own experiences/knowledge, e.g. if students heard a talk on solar energy, they could be asked to think of other renewable sources of energy.
• Extending notes into full-fledged written assignments or as basis for speech; using information obtained from listening for problem-solving.

1. **LISTENING ACTIVITIES**

There is no need to contrive an entire lesson based on listening. Active listening can be included in any type of lesson. The warm-up phase offers a ready slot and is ‘especially suitable, as the listening serves to attune the students to the language. Even though some activities require the class to speak or write, this production is limited and the focus is always on listening. The listening games can also be planned as a reserve activity. They are presented here in a rough order of appropriacy by level. The early ones are for beginner classes and the later Ones can be used with more advanced learners.

**Procedures in doing any Listening activities**

• Identify the purpose for the listening exercise or activity before getting students to listen to the prepared material.
• Supply them with written material which is necessary for them to complete their task before they begin to engage in listening. Always remember to inform them about what they are going to do after listening to the material.
• Give them an example of the type of task to do after listening to the exercise or activity.
• Read, tell or give listening material with emphasis on normal speed and intonation patterns. Be certain not to slow down reading or telling the listening material to avoid distorting stress and intonation.
• Repeat the listening exercise or activity once again if necessary depending on the length and difficulty of listening content.
• Supply them with an answer key and let them correct their own answers and record their own scores.
• Monitor and check their corrections and performance. Give praise words to those who do well and give remedial exercises to those who are having problems.
Second section: Teaching Reading Skill

Reading offers language input, as listening does. However, because it is fast and silent, the efficient reader is exposed to much more accurate linguistic content in a short space of time than when listening or engaging in interactive activities. Good readers become autonomous, able to read outside the classroom and to stay in touch with English through periodicals and books when they leave school. Through the rich language environment, readers can acquire a large vocabulary and an implicit command of the limitless language forms, plausibly and almost effortlessly. Good writing is probably the product of reading, too. We learned to write our mother tongue largely as a consequence of reading, not by practising spelling and writing. Clearly, reading in the foreign language deserves attention, and reading passages should not be viewed merely as a springboard for speaking or writing activities. An aim of most language teaching programmes should be to develop the students' reading competence.

Reading is a very complex process involving many physical, intellectual and emotional reactions. The physical variable i.e., visual perception (perceptual skill) is a prerequisite of accurate and rapid reading. However, many people, including several professional teachers, think that reading merely involves the ability to sound the words printed on a page. Your understanding of the skill you are teaching and your choice of how you teach the skill will very strongly influence what and how you teach. So we will take some time trying to understand what reading involves before going on to think about how actually to teach it.

I. WHAT READING INVOLVES?

1- Reading involves knowledge of certain reading mechanism

a) The direction in which a text is to be read varies from language to language. For example, English script is to be read from left to right, whereas Arabic script is read and written from right to left across a line of print.

b) The Eye Movement Drill in which Arabs are used to move their eyes from right to left while reading an Arabic text. They are not trained, to moving their eyes, in contrast, from left to right while reading the English script. This habitual style of reading constitutes a great problem in developing effective perceptual skills of reading English and in increasing reading speed in English. This drill is very essential to improve the pre-reading skill. A language learner should be drilled in how to move his eyes properly during reading a text. The eye movement drill includes only two or three bars across the line. The student is required to move his eyes from left to right quickly and make a fixation only on the bars of each line. Timing should be identified in each drill to assess the reader's progress. There are three objectives for using this type of technique:

- To improve the student’s ability to move his eyes accurately across the line. This will improve visual perception of words and phrases.
- To eliminate the number of unnecessary stops a language reader makes while reading along the printed line.
- To speed up the language reader's perception of words/phrases by recognizing the shapes of words correctly while pupil is reading, the language reader should make rapid and accurate eye fixations. Slow and inaccurate eye pauses result in slow reading and low comprehension. This drill should be timed in order to evaluate the progress of the readers. Similar to the former drill the recognition should be made on groups of words or phrases.
- To develop speed of eye movement, the language learner should be trained to move his/her eyes from left to right across each line of print and not to look back on any line, by making certain stops to glance on groups of words and phrases. Language learners should be asked to read chunk by chunk, and phrase by phrase, not word by word and make at the most three fixations on them per line. Hence, to develop accurate perceptual skills the language learner should be trained extensively to use the following drill.

  c) The way meaning is represented in print varies from language to language. English have an alphabet in which each letter and letter combination has a sound and a word can be made up by putting together letters that together combine to make the sound of the word.

  d) Even when languages share the same alphabet, the letter-sound correspondences are not always the same. Teacher should use many drills to improve the visual discrimination of

2- Real reading involves not merely sounding of the words in a text but understanding the meaning or message the words are intended to carry.

If one knows the phonetic rules of English, he would have read any text aloud but he still there is a possible of having no message if he had no enough knowledge of the world to make sense of the content.

3- Understanding a text involves understanding the language in which it is written

Knowledge of the language in which a text is written is the first requirement of reading. It is not enough for a person to be able to sound out what is in print. He needs prior knowledge of the language in which a text is written to make sense of it. Just as language learning is a life-long process, learning to read too is process. It does not stop when you learn to convert printed words to sounds.
4- Reading involves utilizing previous knowledge (of the world, of culture, of the topic under discussion, of the print conventions being used, etc.)

A rule of thumb we often use when we select a text to read is that it should in some way extend our knowledge or skill: give new perspective regarding old knowledge, provide new information, provide new opportunities for intellectual, emotional or spiritual development, etc. However, almost always the new knowledge is approached through existing knowledge. Reading involves meaning-getting not just sounding out words.

5- Reading is a thinking process

In a most obvious sense, reading involves thinking. It is the attempt of the reader to understand as nearly as possible the thinking of the writer. In a less obvious but perhaps more crucial way, reading involves thinking of our own. We infer, we predict, we draw conclusions, etc.

6- Reading is an interactive process

When we talk to someone, we interact. That is obvious. We listen to what the other person is saying. We agree. We disagree. We question and we respond. The reader interacts in a less obvious way. Your reaction to any text is determined by many things: previous knowledge of the content of the text, attitudes and beliefs about the content, the author, form of writing (advertisements, newspapers, etc.); the degree of your interest in the subject matter, etc.

7- Reading is a life-support system

We need to read different kinds of texts and for all of purposes. We need read the label on the bottle to remind ourselves about the dosage of medicine to take. We need to the game instructions in order to learn how to learn how plays a board game. We need to read the programme summary to find out what TV programmes are on. We read the instructions to do our class tests. We need to read reference books, journals and textbooks to get information about all the new things experts are finding out about us and our world.

8- Reading is not a single skill that we use all the time in the same way but is a multiple skill that is used differently with different kinds of texts and in fulfilling different purposes.

We do not read a telephone directory in the same way we read a textbook. We do not accept the truth of statements made in an advertisement in the same way we accept research findings published in a scientific magazine. We do not read an article in the same way when we read it to find out if it is relevant and interesting as when we read it to compare or contrast it with another article on the same topic.

9- Wide reading experience in a particular kind of text is often necessary for proper understanding of anyone instance of that kind of writing.

It is the fact that you have read many film advertisements and have knowledge of the conventions used there (e.g. listing show times without labelling them as show time; listing all the cinemas that are showing the film before indicating at the end what film is being shown in all of them) that helps you to get the information you need without difficulty. A small child who knows how to read may still need to be taught the special way in which information is presented in this kind of text.

10- What reading enables a person to do must be perceived as interesting and worthwhile. Otherwise, no reading will take place beyond school and beyond the stage of learning to read.

The reading teacher’s job does not end when the student can read. It also involves making him want to read. In this sense it is not enough to bring the horse to the water. You must also make him thirsty.

II. AIMS OF TEACHING READING

In the last section we looked at what it is a mature reader does when he reads. This should give you an in-depth understanding of the nature of the reading process and some idea of the purposes of reading. In this section we will look at the objectives, not of reading but of teaching reading.

The reading component emphasizes sub-skills which help develop pupils to become independent and mature readers. As such, the sub-skills in reading extend from basic word, phrase and sentence recognition to retrieval of specific information from the text and response to the text. The reading component will also provide pupils with the opportunity of developing study skills such as using dictionaries and encyclopaedias and extracting information from maps, plans and graphs.

The use of a wide range of texts for the teaching of reading skills is recommended. A variety of texts for the teaching of reading skills is also recommended. A variety of text types will not only enrich pupils’ vocabulary and language structure but will also promote the application of reading skills for different purposes. Towards this end, pupils are also encouraged to read extensively outside the classroom with minimal teacher guidance.

Your aims can centre around one or more of the following areas:

1) development of reading skills; study skills; comprehension skills;
2) introduction (or practice) of an important/ new genre, e.g. poem, flowchart, etc.
3) creation of a new interest or a cashing in on current interest so that pupils will read more;
4) the ironing out of old (bad) habits, e.g. word by word reading;
5) the development of flexible reading strategies, e.g. skimming for obtaining an overview and reading intensively to obtain an accurate picture of what is being described;

III. SUB-SKILLS OF READING:

- **Help pupils to associate and recognize the printed script which include:**

  1. **Association:** is used to develop the skills for effective reading. A learner is asked to make an association between the sounds of the spoken words/sentences and the visual symbols of a printed page. For further discussion see pre-reading drills and the methods of reading EFL.

  2. **Recognition:** Effective reading requires the instant recognition of words or phrases. A learner needs to look for reading clues to enable him to recognize the printed word. The reading clues encompass context clues, sight word recognition clues, phonic clues, structural clues and dictionary skills. Hence EFL learners should be engaged in doing plenty of drills in eye-movement and word/phrase recognition as a means to increase reading speed and comprehension ability. The following drills are thought to meet this need: eye movement, visual discrimination of letter, rapid word identification, number recognition.

- **Help pupils to become independent reader**

When you teach reading, you are not just teaching your pupil to understand the text that you have chosen. You are using the text to teach him reading skills that he can use when he chooses to read. So teach only the words that are useful generally and not all the text. Teach the pupils how to use context when they try to make sense of what reading. Teach them when and how to use dictionary, an index, a table of contents and so on.

- **Develop response to text.**

This means that you must recognize that pupils are individuals and that they must learn to respond as individuals to the texts they read. If they do not do so, they will not enjoy the reading. So ask questions like: *Do you like Mr. X in the story?* *Do you agree with what Y did?* *Why?* *Do you believe what the writer says?* *What would you do if you were X?*

- **Help pupils read with adequate understanding**

In practice, this means that a pupil does have to understand everything in a text. He needs to understand only what is important for his purpose. If you insist that pupils should understand everything in the text, you will only be teaching them a reading-related disease called 'barking at print.' You will make pupils begin to think that the few 'hard words' they do not know are more important than the many simple words that they do know and which form the bulk of the meaning of the text. So, if pupils ask meanings of words they do not know, get them to see if they actually need them for their purposes. Ask them, for example, to answer all the questions that you have given them and then to see which question requires understanding of the meaning of the word they don't know. If there are questions that require the meaning of the word, you could ask them to see if the meaning of the word from context before asking them to look up a dictionary. All these steps help independence training and they encourage reading for meaning rather than reading words.

- **Help pupils read at appropriate speed.**

Training in this is often not given in Saudi Arabia. Pupils read a short excerpt for half an hour or forty-five minutes. This is not the way most mature readers read. They read different things at different speeds and part of learning to read different kinds of material. To give effective training in this, you must do two things. One get texts that have pupils can read comfortably, at the speed the kind of context of text you have chosen is normally read. For example, nobody reads a story like they read a legal contract. So choose stories that pupils can read at the speed stories are usually read. If they have to stumble over every other word in the story, then pupils will not enjoy the story. This means that they will not try to read stories on their own.

- **Help pupils read silently.**

Most teachers in early stages of teaching pay a lot of attention to reading aloud. In fact, many think that reading is sounding out the words in print. However, if we look at the real needs of the pupils as they grow up and live as members of a society, we will find that reading aloud plays a very small part. Only a few people, like news readers, read aloud. Most of the rest of us read silently. We read a lot faster when we read silently since our mind and eye work a lot faster than our mouth. We also do not disturb others as we would if we read aloud. So, as a teacher of reading, you should concentrate on reading silently. Reading aloud does have a place in teaching but as an aid to learning, not as an end in itself.

The reading speed depends mainly on the ability to read a chunk of words per glance. Fast readers make two or three fixations i.e., pauses per line. Slow reading results in perceiving and recognizing isolated words, i.e., word by word. Rapid reading is developed through regular training in eye-movement from left to right with few fixations at a glance from the early stage of reading onwards. Flash cards with phrases and sentences reinforce the sight skill and then increase the speeding rate of reading. Silent reading also speeds up the reading rate when it is used appropriately, under the guidance of the reading teacher. Practice in rapid phrase identification also enables the reader to recognize
the shapes of a group of words or phrases correctly while reading. Here the language reader should make rapid and accurate eye fixations. Slow and inaccurate eye pauses result in slow reading and low comprehension. Lip movement and line following with finger also reduce reading rate.

**What silent reading involves?**

1. Recognizing structures, words, etc. These involve acquiring general service words that most people would need but also words and structures typically used in the content areas the pupils are likely to want to read about in English.
2. Predicting outcomes, guessing word meanings using contextual clues.
3. Applying a reading strategy to the text, e.g. deciding whether to skim some parts of the text or read the whole of it carefully; increasing the pace of reading through increasing sight vocabulary, etc.
4. Making connections within the text, e.g.
   - be able to recognize what words such as this, that, such, one, it refer to;
   - recognize that the words car, smaller vehicle refer to the same object in a text
5. Thinking while reading: ask questions classify deduce form impressions predict
6. Having an affective reaction to the text (I like this, I don't like the way that character treats his mother, etc.);
7. Building up familiarity with the many different kinds of texts the student is likely to need to read in English, e.g. road signs, bus schedules, advertisements, travel brochures, journal articles, textbooks, poems, novels.

- **Help pupils to develop some strategies and attitudes of skilled readers**

  Teaching reading, means enabling a person to acquire the skills, strategies and attitudes required to make sense of text. Reading aims can centre on the development of any aspect of skilled reading:

  1. **Improving motivation**
  2. **Increasing awareness of different reading purposes e.g. finding out what the text is about locating a particular item of information entertaining oneself informing oneself performing a task**
  3. **Developing different reading strategies like:**
     - **Skimming**
   
     Skimming is a type of rapid reading technique. The purpose of this technique is to read rapidly. It is widely used to gain quick information from a text or article by passing over it swiftly. A person skim-read to grasp quickly the main idea from a passage. He/She may also skim-read to test and assess materials for skipping or selecting. In these cases he/she may want to have a general overview of the reading material and need not read it precisely and thoroughly. We may also skim-read newspapers, magazines, familiar books or articles. Skimming is an economical and time saving technique. To skim-read correctly, you need to be familiar with the organizational patterns of writing and the following procedures. There are four types of skimming: Skimming main ideas, skimming for revising a textbook, and skimming a newspaper, and skimming a magazine or journal.
     - **Scanning**
   
     Scanning is a type of speed-reading technique. The purpose of this technique is to examine closely and rapidly a piece of printed or written material. It is used when the reader wants to locate a particular piece of information or fact without necessarily understanding the whole of a passage or script. The reader, for example, may scan-read a chapter of a book as rapidly as possible in order to find out information about a particular date, name, figure, or amount. Scanning comparatively is easier than skimming because the reader knows ahead of time what he wants to find. Scanning is used widely in the following situations:
     1. Looking up a number in telephone directory.
     2. Looking up a name in a list.
     3. Looking up days and dates in a schedule.
     4. Looking up a word or idiom in the dictionary.
     5. Looking up a reference in a book.
     6. Looking up a quotation in a research paper. g. Looking up a subject in an index of a book.
     7. Looking up an author's name or a title of a book in a library card catalogue
  4. **Improving comprehension skills**

   A language learner should understand what he reads. The essence of reading is undoubtedly understanding the idea, thought and message of a text. Precise understanding is the ultimate end for a learner. This enables the reader to understand exactly the meaning of the text whether it is a piece of literature, a scientific journal, a school book or a course syllabus. One of the most common aspects of reading focussed on in second language teaching is that concerned with developing comprehension skills. The Barrett Taxonomy of comprehension skills is one of the best known:
Simplified form of Barrett's Taxonomy of comprehension skills:

- **Literal recognition or recall**
  This involves understanding of information that is explicitly stated in the text. Such questions ensure that the views and information overtly expressed in the text are understood.
  For example, recognition or recall of main ideas, details, sequence, cause-effect relationships, character traits.

- **Inference**
  This involves drawing conclusions not stated in the text but implied by the facts given. The reader uses knowledge of linguistic implications, logic, previous knowledge of related situations, etc. in arriving at his conclusions. For example, inferring main ideas, supporting details, sequence, cause-effect relationship, predicting outcomes.

- **Evaluation**
  Judgements about whether something is real or imaginary, whether it is appropriate, worthwhile, desirable or acceptable. Evaluation involves values and therefore there is usually no answer to questions involving evaluation

- **Appreciation**
  For example, emotional response to plot or theme; reactions to the author's use of language. Appreciation involves the taste. Again, there are no 'correct' answers to questions involving evaluation. Such questions provide good opportunities for exchange of views and interpretations. They can be very enjoyable

### IV. Stages in Learning to Read

All the skills and strategies required in learning to read a cannot be acquired all at once. Learning to read is a developmental process. At different stages, different things are given special focus. Generally, four stages are recognized: reading readiness, early reading, developmental reading and mature reading. The first three stages are taken as the stages of learning to read while the stage is seen primarily as the stage of reading to learn. The school teacher is primarily concerned with early reading and developmental reading, these will be given greater coverage than reading readiness and the life-long process of mature reading.

#### 1. Reading readiness

This is mainly the concern of the pre-school teacher. At this stage the child who wants to read in English needs the following ability:

- to develop his knowledge of the English language so that he can understand what he reads;
- To motivate to learn to read in English;
- to discriminate between shapes so that he can recognize letters and words when he begins to learn to read;
- to recognize that print has meaning just as talk has meaning.

We shall not, however, concern ourselves with the techniques of teaching these skills here. Consult a book on reading readiness if any of your pupils do not have these skills and attitudes.

#### 2. Early reading

Early reading basically involves:

- **Motivation**
  It would be next to impossible to teach a child to read when he himself is’ not interested. So part of your job in teaching reading would be to create a positive attitude to reading among the learners. You can usually do this by involving pupils in activities which make them aware of how interesting a book can be, e.g. by reading (as opposed to telling) stories and making available many books with interesting pictures and facts about things children would naturally be interested in. You should also make your pupils enjoy learning about new things and stimulate their curiosity.

- **Developing language and comprehension skills**
  Understanding what people say is a prerequisite for understanding what people write because both understanding what people say is a prerequisite for understanding what people write because both involve understanding language and an ability to think. So spend a lot of time building up your pupils' knowledge of spoken English.

- **Learning the print conventions of English**
  This basically involves learning the answers to questions like the following:
  - Which is the front of the book?
  - Which is the right way up for a book?
  - What tells the story: the print or the pictures?
  - What is the difference between words and pictures?
  - Where on the page do I start reading?
  - Do we read from left to right, right to left or top to bottom?
• What do we do when we get to the end of a line? Why are there some spaces between some letters but not between others?
• How do I know when to stop, when to pause, etc.? What do I do with signs like these: . . . : ’ ?

- **Word Recognition Skills**
  These are the skills which enable the reader to pronounce and/or derive meaning from the printed page. Two major categories of skills are included: sight word skills and work attack skills.

1. **Sight word skills**
   Why sight words are important
   
   The words that a reader can recognize what they could, are described as his sight words. This sight words enable the reader to handle the decoding (turning print into sound and/or meaning) automatically. This automaticity of processing is very important. If the reader has to spend most of his time and energy working out what each word is, he becomes tired very quickly and he lost interest in what he is reading. Most of his mental energy would go into the decoding process, little for thinking about and appreciating the contents. Possessing a large store of sight words is very important to a child for motivational purposes. Being able to recognize words and read books give the learner a sense of achievement and shows him that his efforts at learning to read are paying dividends.

2. **Word Attack Skills**
   Six basic kinds of word attack strategies are recognized to be able to guess the unknown words in English language:

   1. **Using configuration clues or Sight Word Recognition Clues**
      When a reader uses the shape of a word in pronouncing or recognizing the word, he is said to be using configuration clues. Such clues are useful at the earliest stage but soon loses its importance when child begins to learn abstract words which be visually represented.

      In sight word recognition clues, the reading teacher holds up a picture or a series of pictures in his hand and assists the pupils in recognizing the words associated with each picture. He teaches reading by repeatedly telling pupils about the given words. Sight words must be memorized through repetition. It is a type of look and say method. New sight words are added very slowly. Words are reinforced many times before new ones are added. The teacher works very hard, to draw his pupils' attention initially to a series of words, each with a picture referent. The curriculum developer anticipates that pupils will make some type of association between the symbol and its referent. Pupils should be introduced to study basic actions (come, run, jump, took, stand, open) and structure words (tense, articles, prepositions). The teacher should introduce at least 220 function words which constitute nearly half of our ordinary reading vocabulary.

   2. **Using Picture Clues**
      These are some of the earliest clues children learn to use. This skill again soon loses its importance as a child begins to learn abstract words which cannot be visually represented.

   3. **Phonics/Phonetic clues:**
      Using phonic analysis, the teacher generalizes rules and facts about the relationship of sounds to certain letter symbols. These sound generalizations are employed as clues to read specific letter symbols. Sound generalizations are derived from the characteristics of sounds of letters or groups of letters. They describe the sound-to-symbol relationship of the English Language. Phonic clues deal with both consonant and vowel elements as in:

      * [t] is silent between [s n] as in "to listen";
      * initial [k] is silent before [n] as in "to know";
      * [c] is pronounced [S] before [I, e, y] as in "city, ice, cycle".

      The teacher can help students acquire the consonants occurring at initial, medial and final positions of a word. He should test them to fill in omitted letters in a word and pronounce the whole word: -itle (I), -Idl, -ome (c) etc. Also, he can use the vowel completion exercises in testing his students for example. - th(r-o-e) cl-ss/a, -d-ent(u). Letters and vowels between parentheses are the omitted ones in these examples.

   4. **Using Contextual Clues**
      It is used to determine the unknown word in order to read and comprehend it efficiently. We usually read in order to understand what the writer says, not in order to see if we can recognize all words used by the writer. This means that when we can understand the message in a text, we ignore the unfamiliar words it contains. Sometimes the unfamiliar word may be important but we can guess what this word means. Context clues are found in pictures, in the meaning of known words in the sentence, or in the oral discussion of the class. The context often helps understand the particular meaning of the word or phrase. The words surrounding an unfamiliar word and the general ideas included in the surrounding text often contain several clues to the meaning of the word. Knowledge of the
situation may also help the reader to guess the possible message in the word. When a reader uses these clues, he is said to be using contextual clues.

Unlike the first two kinds of word attack skills, this skill is used throughout a person's reading life. Context clues are only effective, however, when the surrounding words and ideas are known. A certain degree of self-confidence too is required because an insecure reader would find it hard to risk a guess and would usually prefer to look the word up in a dictionary. So when teaching the use of contextual clues, make sure all the words of text, except the word you want the pupils to guess, are known to the pupils.

5. Using the Dictionary

Dictionary skills provide the reader with the independent means for determining the meaning of an unknown word and finding its pronunciation. It is used in a word recognition pronunciation sense. Pupils may also use a picture dictionary to identify unknown words. These are crucial skills but you can only start teaching your pupils dictionary skills after they have learnt alphabetical order and have enough words for them to understand the explanations given in the dictionary.

6. Using Structural Clues

They deal with the recognition of morphemic structures such as root (stem) words, compounds, contractions; endings, affixes and syllables. These structures permit reading to occur in a rapid fashion because the reader will break up the word into smaller elements by syllabic structures. Knowledge of some common prefixes and suffixes as well as roots can help pupils make sense of unfamiliar words.

Structural elements have corresponding sounds, and frequently corresponding meanings. In the word "boys" the morpheme -s indicates the presence of more than a single boy. (The morpheme gives an additional meaning and also an extra sound of -s). Structural clues are noticed in common contractions, endings and affixes. The following contractions are most common: Isn't, I'll, I'm, and It's. Common endings include -s, -ed, -ing, -er, and -est. The common prefixes accounted for most of the reading in the elementary school are: dis-, in-, pre-, re-, and un.- The following suffixes are the most common ones: -ion, -tion, -ance, -ent, -al, and -ly.

V. EXTENSIVE AND INTENSIVE READING METHODS

To get maximum benefit from reading, students need to be involved in both extensive and intensive reading. Whereas with the former a teacher encourages students to choose for themselves what they read and to do so for pleasure and general language improvement, the latter is often (but not exclusively) teacher chosen and directed, and is designed to enable students to develop specific receptive skills (see sub-skills of reading).

Extensive reading method:

We have discussed the importance of extensive reading for the development of our students' word recognition and for their improvement as readers overall. But it is not enough to tell students to 'read a lot'; we need 'to offer them a programme which includes appropriate materials, guidance, tasks, and facilities such as permanent or portable libraries of books. We need to build up a library of suitable books. Although this may appear costly, it will be money well spent. If necessary, we should persuade our schools and institutions to provide such funds, or raise money through other sources. Having persuaded our students about the benefits of extensive reading, we can organise reading programmes where indicate to students how many books we expect them to read over a given period. We can explain how they can make their choice of what to read, making it clear that the choice is theirs, but that the can consult other students' reviews and comments to help them make that choice. We can suggest that they look for books in a genre (be it crime fiction, romantic novels, science fiction, etc.) that they enjoy, and that they make appropriate level choices. We will act throughout as part organiser, part tutor.

In the extensive reading activity, an EFL teacher provides his students with plenty of printed pages to read as a homework assignment with no help or guidance from him. The reading materials consist of interesting short stories, novels and plays and tales. Such books succeed because the writers or adaptors work within specific lists of allowed words and grammar. This means that students at the appropriate level can read them with ease and confidence. The chosen material should have neither technical or scientific vocabulary nor complicated grammar. Students are encouraged to read extensively without paying much concern to the vocabulary they do not know as long as they can understand the general concept of the reading text. Though the material plays no role in the EFL program, it is useful for developing good reading habit as an extracurricular activity. The material should be selected on the basis of its statement of purpose and its level of difficulty. If they are struggling to understand every word, they can hardly be reading for pleasure- the main goal of this activity.

The material should meet the students' need to build up vocabulary and structure and to gain general understanding from its content. It should be easy to read and to understand. It should be extensive in quantity and interesting in its topics. Students should be able to read the chosen material quickly with personal enjoyment and self-confidence outside the class. Frequent and systematic feedback on the extensive reading is essential to keep students reading.
Most students will not do a lot of extensive reading by themselves unless they are encouraged to do so by their teachers. Clearly, then, our role is crucial. We need to promote reading and by our own espousal of reading as a valid occupation, persuade students of its benefits. Perhaps, for example, we can occasionally read aloud from books we like and show, by our manner of reading, how exciting books can be. Because students should be allowed to choose their own reading texts, following their own likes and interests, they will not all be reading the same texts at once. For this reason - and because we want to prompt students to keep reading - we should encourage them to report back on their reading in a number of ways. One approach is to set aside a time at various points in a course - say every two weeks - at which students can ask questions and/or tell their classmates about books they have found particularly enjoyable, or noticeably awful. However, if t this is inappropriate because not all students read at the same speed - or because they often do not have much to say about the book in front of their colleagues, we can ask them each to keep a weekly reading diary either on its own, or as a part of any learning journal they may be writing. Students can also write short book reviews for the class notice board. At the end of a month, a semester, or a year, they can vote on the most popular book in the library.

**Intensive reading method:**

In the intensive reading activity, an EFL teacher supplies his learners with short passages to practice reading in the class or at home. The primary purpose of this activity is to teach new vocabulary and concepts and to develop comprehension skills of the students. In this activity the reading teacher provides his students with a variety of exercises for learning syntactical devices and lexical features. Students are never asked to produce or use grammatical patterns, but to recognize the structural clues for decoding the message. They are also trained to use lexical clues to decode messages from the reading text. The emphasis on the study of vocabulary and grammatical patterns should generally be on decoding. In intensive reading classes, students are taught to develop such skill for recognition as guessing meaning from context, using a dictionary and rapid phrase identification. The material normally deals with scientific or news reports; argumentative representations, narration, description and summary of a thing, persons, events and commentary reactions. It is considered an essential part of the established EFL programs. It assists and promotes the degree of understanding of students. The material is selected on the ground that its content is a little bit difficult and hard to read swiftly with only two fixations per line of print. This type of activity often requires a long time to manipulate.

**Intensive reading: the roles of the teacher**

In order to get students to read enthusiastically in class, we need to work to create interest in the topic and tasks. However, there are further roles we need to adopt when asking students to read intensively:

- **Organiser:** we need to tell students exactly what their reading purpose is, and give them clear instructions about how to achieve it, and how long they have to do this. Once we have said 'You have four minutes for this' we should not change that time unless observation (see below) suggests that it is necessary.

- **Observer:** when we ask students to read on their own we need to give them space to do so. This means restraining ourselves from interrupting that reading, even though the temptation may be to add more information or instructions. While students are reading we can observe their progress since this will give us valuable information about how well they are doing individually and collectively, and will tell us whether to give them some extra time or, instead, move to organising feedback more quickly than we had anticipated.

- **Feedback organiser:** when our students have completed the task, we can lead a feedback session to check that they have completed the task successfully. We may start by having them compare their answers in pairs and then ask for answers from the class in general or from pairs in particular. Students often appreciate giving paired answers like this since, by sharing their knowledge, they are also sharing their responsibility for the answers. When we ask students to give answers we should always ask them to say where in the text they found the information for their answers. This provokes a detailed study of the text which will help them the next time they come to a similar reading passage. It also tells us exactly what comprehension problems they have if and when they get answers wrong. It is important to be supportive when organising feedback after reading if we are to counter any negative feelings students might have about the process, and if we wish to sustain their motivation.

- **Prompt:** When students have read a text we can prompt them to notice language features in that text, we may also, as controllers, direct them to certain features of text construction, clarifying ambiguities, and making them aware of issues of the text structure which they had not come across previously.

**VI. Types of Reading**

**A. Silent Reading**

A proficient reader can adopt the following characteristics while reading silently:

1. **Eye movement:** The student should move his eyes very rapidly from left to right without looking back at the previous words.

2. **Complete silence:** He should make no lip movement. He should produce no oral words, no muttering or murmuring.
3. Accurate eye fixations: He should make fewer pauses than he does while reading orally. He should make, say, two fixations per line.
4. Speed: He should increase the rate of his reading. Quick reading results in better understanding of the printed material. Both speed and comprehension should be emphasized in silent reading.

**Techniques in Teaching Silent Reading**

A teacher in reading may wish to use the following procedures in using silent reading for his pupils:
1. a. Give a short and easy but interesting passage to your students. They should be familiar with its topic.
2. Ask students to read it silently but rapidly without moving their lips or pronouncing its words.
3. Set up the time for the reading passage.
4. Formulate some comprehension questions on the reading passage.

**B. Oral Reading**

A reader should consider the following characteristics while reading orally:
1. Pronunciation: The teacher should give adequate and clear pronunciation to each word.
2. Rational reading: He should read it with reasonable speed.
3. Pauses: He should make proper pauses and correct stops to help learners understand the reading passage. Unnecessary pauses create confusion in grasping the meaning of the passage.
4. Tone: He should give the accurate tones of a falling or a rising voice.
5. Stress: He should produce a word or a syllable with louder and longer duration using more air from the lung than the surrounding words or syllables. Wrong stress can mislead the listeners.

**Techniques in Teaching Oral Reading**

The following techniques are suggested for EFL teachers to use in teaching oral reading:
1. A language teacher should give constant practice in vocabulary recognition of the reading passage. He can use flash cards of a word or phrase, eye movement devices, and minimal pair exercises. He should also stress the use of other visual discrimination exercises and auditory discrimination drills to enhance reading.
2. He should ask his students to use their fingers or their pens from the top to the bottom of the printed page at the left end of the line while reading. Students are asked not to move them from left to right across the page while following the line in order to avoid the undesirable result i.e., a bad reading habit.
3. He should ask the students to look up while reading aloud. A student is asked not to read from the book. He should read to his teacher and classmates. He should read a phrase or a short sentence silently and then look up as if saying it to someone. He must look up during the reading of the whole sentence. He must not just look for a second and then look down again. The students start speaking the language even when they are "reading" and their progress can dramatically improve. This technique is very useful because the sentence that is read is held in the mind for a few minutes. There is an effort to memorize and remember it instead of only sounding out the print. Speaking is greatly reinforced by means of this technique.

**VII. READING ACTIVITY TYPE**

Activities to teach reading are different from activities designed to test reading. The main focus of teaching activities should be enabling: enabling the pupil to acquire/practise the sub-skills he needs to perform the tasks required of him; enabling the pupil to develop a love for reading, enabling him to form good reading habits, etc.

In order to enable the learner to read a teacher needs to be able to monitor. However, there is a problem in this. A teacher response to reading cannot be observed when people speak or write, we can directly observe whether they speak or write well and what some of their problems are. In reading, this is this is not possible. Reaction to reading goes on inside the readers' minds and therefore is not directly observable. As a teacher, however, you need to be able to observe learner behaviour so that you can plan effective strategies to help your pupils improve their performance.

The most common practice in the teaching of is to devise comprehension questions and to obtain verbal responses to these. However, response to what is read need not always be verbal. It can be obtained in two forms: verbal and non-verbal. Basically, here are two kinds of verbal responses: reading aloud and silent reading.

1. **Verbal responses of reading activities**
   
   **A. Reading aloud**

   The most common verbal response sought in our schools is to have the pupils read the text aloud. Either a single pupil reads the text aloud for the rest of the class to listen, or different pupils take turns to read different parts of the text. When reading aloud is done routinely and occupies a major proportion of teaching time, this can be counter-productive. The time spent on it can more usefully be spent on silent reading. A number of suggestions on when to use reading aloud and for what purpose are given below for your reference:
Good reading aloud practices

a) Reading-while-listening

Pupils listen to a good reading of the text while they look at the words being read. There are books on the market that come with tapes and these can be used for individual practice or group listening. You or a good reader may also read for the rest of the class to listen while reading. This technique improves reading in a number of ways:
1. improves comprehension by restoring features of speech, e.g. intonation, chunking, pronunciation, pause;
2. with early readers, it also aids perception of sound-letter correspondences.

b) For diagnostic purpose

Get pupils, especially the weaker ones, to read to you at least twice a week. You can get them to come to you, one by one, while the rest of the class is doing other work. This is not a pronunciation exercise but a reading exercise. So pay attention to:
1. the words they don't seem to know;
2. whether they read word by word or they read in meaningful chunks;
3. whether they correct themselves when what they read doesn't make sense. For example, do they read on when they say 'He was a bird' instead 'He saw a bird'? 
4. whether they are able to use contextual or phonic clues when they meet up with a new word.

When you do this regularly, it:
1. helps you 'hear' the problems your pupils face, e.g. words they don't know; word-by-word reading; incorrect chunking, etc.;
2. helps you to evaluate your own practices as a teacher. For example, if all your pupils read word by word, there must be something wrong with your teaching method.

c) Play-reading

Get pupils to read parts in plays. Insist that they read the way the character they are reading would say the words. This kind of reading:
1. helps early readers see writing as speech written down;
2. helps children learn to read with expression;
3. encourages interpretation and creates a natural environment for developing personal responses to reading material;
4. improves attention span. It creates a team-like situation in which each reader must be alert to play his part when his turn comes;
5. enables them to enjoy plays without extra expenditure of time;
6. is something children enjoy.

d) Choral reading

Get pupils to read together sometimes. It has the following advantages:
1. It masks individual strengths and weaknesses and creates a supportive environment for poor readers to acquire good pronunciation, rhythm, etc.
2. Where sound aspects, e.g. rhythm, rhyme, contribute significantly to meaning as in poet, reading aloud becomes is not merely desirable, it becomes necessary for appreciation and full enjoyment of the work. Pupils read in parts and teachers need special training to develop choral reading of this kind.
3. It can provide occasional variation to silent reading. Unison reading like this is better than individual reading aloud as it is more cost-effective. Individuals reading round the class take a lot more time and bring about far less learning.

e) Individual reading to teacher

Get pupils to periodically read to ally. This practice enables you to:
1. check individual progress;
2. give incentive to pupils to achieve individual progress;
3. achieve individualized instruction; to give specialized help at the time and level at which it is required.

f) Audience reading

Get pupils to select something of their own to read to the class. Tell them they must choose something that they would like to share with their friends. Find something to praise about each child's efforts. Th the following advantages:
1. It gives pupils an opportunity to select their own material instead of always reading what the teacher has selected for them. Without too much teacher effort, you can visualization in terms of interest and levels;
2. It makes pupils very anxious to succeed and therefore raises their level of motivation and effort;
3. It gives you an insight into your pupils' real interests;
4. It helps you collect material selected by the pupils themselves for use with future classes.

**g) Reading aloud as part of feedback**

Check on silent reading by getting students to read out relevant bits from the text to support their answers or argument during discussion.

**B. Verbal techniques for the development of silent reading skills**

There are number of different exercise formats commonly used in the teaching of reading. Some of the most common are discussed below:

**a) Open-ended questions**

The most common form of verbal response is elicited through comprehension questions. These may take the form of open-ended questions where the student formulates his own answers and/or expresses his own interpretation of the meaning of a text. These kinds of questions are important in the development of personal or affective responses to text. Questions such as:

- Do you like this story?
- Does this story remind you of anything in your own life?
- Which character do you like better? Why?
- Do you agree with the writer's view that cars should be abolished? etc.

In fact, most of the higher order skills in Barren's taxonomy are probably best learnt through answering such questions. They make the pupils aware of the need for personal interaction with the text and train him to look for the details that help him to learn to use his previous knowledge, value systems and reasoning in actively responding to what he reads.

There is, however, one major snag in using this format. Most students will not have enough proficiency in the language to express their understanding of and reaction to the text. Since nurturing active response to texts and developing personal responses should be your main purpose in asking these questions, you should not pay too much attention to grammatical errors. You should also accept any reasonable answer and not have a predetermined 'correct' answer for each question. Get pupils to show you what part of the text supports their answers.

**b) Multiple-choice questions (MCQ)**

A detailed explanation of the format of multiple-choice questions and guidelines for their construction is given later: Testing and Evaluation. However, some important distinctions between MCQ as a testing format and MCQ as a teaching device need to be made. As pointed out earlier, teaching involves enabling whereas testing involves assessment of what is already known. This difference is reflected in the way MCQ is constructed and used. What is important in MCQ, as indeed in all reading development activities, is not the correct answer but the means of arriving at the correct answer. What you, as a teacher of reading, must do is to help the pupil build up a repertoire of strategies for effectively responding to text. Here is a possible procedure you may follow:

- Get pupils to read the text individually and tick the correct answers for the first few MCQ items. This is to give individual pupils an opportunity to work at their own pace.
- Hold a class discussion of the answers. Do not stop at getting the correct answer. Ask probing questions like:
  - What do you think is the correct answer for Question 1? What evidence in the text did you use to arrive at your answer? Do you agree with p's answers? What evidence in the text did you use to come to that conclusion? Why P have chosen option D as the answer? M, do you agree with them? Why c can't be the answer? Show me the part of the text that tells you that C and A cannot be the answers. etc.

The purpose of this discussion is to demonstrate to the students how they should work with the text and to prepare them for the group discussion to come. The questions at this stage should hone the pupils' interpretive skills and demonstrate the fact that the same answers can be arrived at through different routes by different people.

Now leave pupils to work on the rest of questions, first alone and then in groups. The individual phase is to give everyone to work on the text at his own pace own way. The group discussion is particularly important. When pupils talk about how they arrived at their answers, say out aloud what they would normally think silently. In this way, the poorer pupils get a chance to initiate thinking procedures of the better pupils and in this way improve their reading abilities. While the pupils work in groups, you should monitor what they say. This will give you insights into the difficulties that your pupils may face in text processing.

- Finally, conduct a class discussion of the answers. Again, the purpose is to help pupils to listen to each other's strategies in understanding texts. Another important function of the class discussion is...
to give the teacher an opportunity to add new strategies that the pupils are not yet familiar with. In this way the teacher contributes to the extension of the pupils' processing skills.

c) **True-False questions**

True-False questions are often used in the teaching of reading in two ways:

- As a quick comprehension check;
- As a stimulus to encourage interpretation and discussion of the text.

**Procedure for use** Proceed in the same way as with MCQ. Start with individual work, then proceed to group work and finally to class discussion. Your primary focus in teaching must be on getting pupils to defend their answers by close reference to the text.

d) **Placement of questions**

Whether the questions are open-ended or in multiple-choice form, the way the pupil processes the text is not influenced solely by the type of question. How a pupil processes a text is also dependant on where the question is placed vis-a-vis the text.

- **Questions given before a pupil reads the text** determine the way he reads the text and the text-processing strategies he uses. For example, a question that requires the location of a detail makes a pupil scan the text; a question that requires global understanding of the main point may require skimming; a question that asks for details to support a stand may force careful reading, etc.

- **Questions placed in the margin** can guide pupils to pay attention to important aspects of the text even as they read the text. This corrects the bad habit of treating the first reading of any text as a decoding exercise and postponing comprehension to the time when comprehension need to be answered. The margin when well-constructed, force pupils comprehension as an on-going process happening at the same time as the decoding process.

- **Questions placed at breaks in a continuous text that has been broken at pedagogically points** can help pupils to see reading comprehension as simultaneous processes to teach them to view comprehension as an on-going evolving process especially when the questions of the oncoming text asked require prediction of the content coming text on the basis of evidence up to that point.

- **Questions placed after the text** can focus the pupils’ attention on anyone point in the text, but most especially they can marshal the pupils’ attention to those understandings that can only come when the text is seen as a whole, e.g., what the main point of the writer is, what the structure of the object described is, etc.

- **Questions on text raised by students**

Other kinds of exercises following are some of the more common ways in which texts are exploited to bring about reading improvement:

1. **Reconstruction:** Making a distorted text whole

   a. **Filling in gapped text (cloze).** Like the MCQ items, these are best worked on collaboratively. For the collaboration to be fruitful, however, you must make sure there are enough clues to help the pupil guess the missing word. The words left out should be meaning-carrying words and not just grammatical words like to and of. When preparing this kind of exercise, leave one or two lines at the beginning of the text without any gaps. This is the 'lead in'. Instruct pupils to read the whole text before starting to fill in gaps. The 'lead in' and reading the whole text before filling in gaps both ensure that pupils get a general idea of the text before they begin to fill in gaps. Follow the procedure recommended for class exploitation of MCQ items. Accept all reason-able answers and don't require a specific answer. Ask pupils to support their answers by pointing out the clues they used in arriving at their answers. Cloze exercises help pupils to learn to see the interrelationship between ideas in a text. They also provide opportunities to acquire the skill of using contextual clues when reading.

2. **Reordering jumbled sentences.** A short text can be cut up and pupils asked to put it back together. Too many sentences would make the exercise more a test of intelligence than an exercise in seeing the relationship between ideas. If you want to use a story for this purpose and the story is too long, you can provide all of the text except the ending for pupils to read. You could then ask them to guess the end of the story. The actual ending can then be provided in jumbled form for them to find out if their guesses were correct. At the elementary level, you could write a summary version of a story you have told/dramatized, and then cut the summary into strips for pupils to arrange in the correct order in groups first and then individually. This kind of exercise makes pupils more sensitive to 'the elements that make the ideas in a text hold together, e.g. linkers, cohesive markers, logic, etc.

3. **Completing an incomplete text,** e.g. by thinking of an ending to a story. This kind of text primarily develops prediction skills.

4. **Jigsaw reading.** Cut up a text into a number of parts. Form groups containing as many students as there, are text parts. After each student has read the text bit given to him, groups try to reconstruct the whole. Each group member gives an oral summary of the contents of his text excerpt. After listening
to everyone's summary of his text excerpt, the group tries to reconstruct the whole story. Another version of jigsaw reading is when a group of pupils are given a common aim, e.g. how best to spend a sum of money to buy party items and each member of the group is given a text that contains information relevant for achieving the common aim, e.g. advertisements of different supermarkets. This activity develops short term memory and enables students to see sense relationships and read for a purpose.

b. **Replacement: Making changes to existing text**
   1) Changing point of view, e.g. make the husband narrate an episode originally narrated by the wife.
   2) Paraphrase, e.g. write a summary in reported speech of a dialogue that took place in the text read by pupils.
   3) Provide different examples (e.g. change the details of a description of a home in England by substituting details of a home in Malaysia for each of the English details provided in the original text). All these exercises help students creatively interpret the text and understand its organization.

c. **Expansion: Making explicit some implicit or assumed information.** Add more details or provide specific instances of a general idea, e.g. If the original text says, 'He was a handsome man'; pupils would be asked to add details, e.g. 'He was tall and had dark wavy hair', etc. You can either provide some alternatives or ask pupils to select the appropriate details or leave them to think up details of their own. This kind of exercise helps pupils understand that a text does not actually say everything; that the reader is often expected to put in missing details and links.

d. **Comparison: Relating one text to another or to one's own previous knowledge.** This kind of exercise forces the pupil to read with discrimination, with conscious attention to detail. These exercises encourage prediction skills an pupils to become attentive readers.

e. **Problem-solving: Spoken or written discussion of aspects of text.** This kind of exercise makes students enjoy reading and therefore nurtures positive attitudes to reading. It also improves evaluative comprehension.

2 Non-verbal responses of reading activities

**Channel conversion**

*What is channel conversion?*

Information can be communicated in a number of ways: in words, through graphic material, through action and so on. When information expressed in one medium is converted into another medium, channel conversion or information transfer is said to have taken place.

*Why is channel conversion important in the teaching of reading?*

Channel conversion is important for a number of reasons:

1) The level of comprehension a person achieves in a language, (his receptive skill) is often much higher than his ability to express himself in the same language (his productive skill). In order to ensure optimum development of the reading skill, therefore, we often have to resort to forms of expressing understanding which are non-verbal.

2) Some information can be more clearly presented using tables, graphs, etc. than through language. For example, a graph show prices a lot better than a verbal description.

3) Information that is presented in the tables, diagrams, etc. is often easier to remember than the same information described in words. The teaching of reading comprehension that includes channel conversion thus facilitating note-taking which is an essential part of study reading.

4) Many texts and almost all textbooks contain information in the form of tables, graphs, diagrams, maps, etc. For this reason alone teaching pupils how to interpret graphs, tables, etc. is important. Here the pupils would learn not only how to make sense of each of these forms and their special ways of presenting information, they would also need to learn to see how the pictures, maps, diagrams, etc. are related to the verbal texts they accompany, e.g. whether the verbal text and the graphic presentation give exactly the same information or different information.

**Guidelines for constructing channel version activities**

1) **Collect and file the graphs, diagrams, etc.** that you come across and which you feel would be appealing/useful to your pupils and likely to lend themselves to the construction of channel conversion exercises.

2) **Select the graphic that you think is suitable for your purposes.** Make sure that it can help you teach the target skill, e.g. if you choose a flow chart you can use it to help pupils to follow the sequence of events or understand sequence markers, but you cannot use it as a means of mowing the appearance of a missing person. You would need a photograph or drawing for this.

3) **Write simple verbal descriptions** in the kind of language you want your pupils to be able to read and understand, If you want to use the original text that came with the graphic, edit the text: simplify the language where necessary, leave out information that is going to distract the pupil from focussing his attention on acquiring the target skills; substitute local equivalents for foreign terms (e.g. papaya for pawpaw),

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One common channel conversion exercise requires pupils to use the graphic to fill gaps in the verbal text and fill gaps in the graphic using information from the text. If you intend to construct this kind of exercise, you should check that the information that you want to blank out is found in both the diagram and the text.

4) **Work out your activity.** Contextualize the activity. Put the pupils in a situation in which what you are asking them to do is natural. Choose situations that are not just natural but also likely to appeal to pupils. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Don’t say</th>
<th>Say</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read the words and draw the picture</td>
<td>This is the description draw the picture, of a man the police are looking for, Imagine you are the police artist.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draw a WANTED poster.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5) **Only use visuals that pupils already know** from coming across them, for example, in other subjects in the school, like geography or history or mathematics. For example, you cannot use a pie chart or a graph with Year 1 pupils.

6) **Do the activity yourself.** This will show you whether the task can actually be done and what level of skill is required to do it.

7) **Fine tune your activity.** For example, if you find that the pupils would find it difficult to draw the picture you want them to, give them a few pictures and ask them to recognize the one that best fits the verbal description or ask them to label the relevant parts in a picture you have provided or you can provide an incomplete picture and get pupils to fill in missing parts using the information in the verbal description.

8) Before you leave pupils to work on the activity on their own, *demonstrate how they should go about doing the activity.*

9) After pupils have finished the activity, *hold a class discussion.* Your focus should not be on correct answers but on how the answers were arrived at. Always get pupils to refer to the text when supporting their answers,

**VIII. SEQUENCES OF A READING LESSON**

A. **Stages In A Reading Lesson**

There are many different kinds of reading lessons. Reading activities vary according to the phase, approach and specific aims of the lesson. At the earliest levels, a lesson may involve providing different contexts for practising essentially the same thing, e.g. developing instant recognition of names of objects in the classroom. However, for the purposes of this section, we will regard a lesson as comprising three basic phases with pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading activities.

B. **Procedures in Teaching Reading**

1) **Pre-Reading Stage:**

This phase usually has one or more of these functions:

a. To stimulate interest in the topic of the text so that pupils do not come to the text 'cold'.

b. To introduce language or concepts which occur in the text but which pupils may not know. The meanings of new vocabulary can be shown through the use of context, picture, drawing, objects, mime, synonym, and antonyms.

c. The teacher can use various techniques to present the new grammatical patterns such as rules, drawings, pictures, realia, diagrams, demonstrations, grids and tables.

d. To help pupils see the relationship of ideas in a difficult text by providing a framework.

e. The teacher should provide his students with practices after the introduction of new vocabulary and structure in order to enhance and reinforce them. There are various and numerous exercises and drills of vocabulary and grammar provided in (teaching vocabulary and grammar) from which the reading teacher may wish to use in his class.

2) **While-Reading Activities**

These includes activities that a pupil engages in while actually reading the text, e.g. questions he has to answer after he has read each instalment of the text, as well as activities he engages in which help him to understand the text by getting him to use the text in various ways, e.g. to answer questions, as stimulus for discussion, as source of information for filling in gaps in a table, for drawing a poster, solving a problem, etc. The purpose of these activities would be to enable pupils to achieve the lesson aims by handling the text in different ways.

A language teacher may wish to use the following steps in teaching the while-reading stage:

1. **Comprehension questions:**
   a) A language teacher reads the comprehension questions about the passage aloud to his class.
   b) He explains or translates them to stimulate students’ understanding.

2. **Silent Reading**
   a) The language teacher asks the entire class to read the passage silently. He may emphasize that students should move their eyes very rapidly from left to right without looking back to the preceding words. He may instruct them to make no lip movement, no muttering, or murmuring. Fewer pauses are recommended and should also be of great concern in silent reading.
   b) Students should try to find the appropriate answers of the comprehension question while reading.
c) A language teacher should monitor his class to ensure that all his class keeps reading. He should give academic help to those who have difficulty in understanding or pronouncing some words without interrupting others.

3. **Renewing students' answers**
   a) A language teacher should encourage his students to give the appropriate answers to the questions about the contents of the passage.
   b) He can give them clues to the answers such as the number of a reading line, the number of words which form the right answer.
   c) He asks them to write or copy the answers in their notebooks.
   d) He may go around in the class making sure that they write the answer carefully.

4. **Oral reading**
   The teacher may go through the following activities: He reads the passage aloud as a model and lets his students listen to it carefully.
   a) He reads phrases or sentences of the passage aloud and lets his students repeat after him.
   b) Each student reads a line or two aloud and others listen to him attentively.
   c) Skimming for locating the main ideas
   Procedures:
   - Skim-read the first sentence of each paragraph.
   - You may add a phrase or two from the second sentence of each paragraph.
   - Skim-read the last sentence of each paragraph, i.e., the summarizing sentence.
   d) Skimming for revising the pages of reading
   Procedures:
   - Divide the pages into small parts, if it is long.
   - Read the title and skim-read the opening paragraphs.
   - Read-the headings or subheadings of the paragraphs.
   - Skim read the summary or conclusion of the passage of reading, if there is one.
   - Read the discussion questions at the end of each chapter, if there are any.
   - Scan-read for the answers of the given questions if they are available.
   e) Scanning an answer to find a fact and an answer to a question, a learner may go through the following scanning steps
   - Decide what type of particular information you are looking for, and think about the form it may take. For example, if you want to know when something happened, you would look for a date. Also, when you have a question with whom you will look for a name, where for a place, what for a thing, how many for an amount, etc

3) **Post-Reading Stage**
   While the primary function of the while-reading activities would be to make pupils look closely into the text, the purpose of post-reading activities would be to look out of the text to see its relevance to other activities the pupils may find interesting or useful.

C. **Guidelines For Preparing A Reading Lesson**
   1. **Think of a sequence of activities** which will either:
      - teach a new skill step-by-step;
      - give pupils opportunities to practise old skills in new/different contexts;
      - enable pupils to do activities that will help them understand and appreciate different aspects of the text, e.g. its content/layout/ style/use of vocabulary/linking devices.
   2. **Work out the details of each activity**:
      - the participation modes: teacher-centred/ class/group/individual work.
      - how feedback is to be obtained (through oral response, individual written assignment, etc.)
   3. **Look through the sequence of activities**. Check to see if the activities:
      - have a clear line of development;
      - are well graded;
      - are motivating and varied;
      - provide the best mix of activity within activities to provide for all levels pupils in the class.
   4. **Work through all the activities yourself**. Do not just work out the answers. Look at different strategies for arriving at the answers. Anticipate the kinds of difficulties pupils may face in dealing with the text/activities. The ways of helping pupils overcome problems:
      - provide a pre-reading activity to iron out the problem before pupils meet it as a problem;
• use the text to show pupils how to overcome the problem when they meet it in their independent reading;
• bring in aids to support understanding, e.g., pictures, charts;
• remove the problem if it would divert pupils from the lesson aims, e.g. by leaving out the part of the text that contains problem or by simplifying the text.

5. Check on the timing of activities. Can the activities been done in the time. Rushing through activities would mean cutting down on time available for exploring how to arrive at answers. A lesson which can be done in a much shorter time than the time provide would bore pupils and so defeat the aim of encouraging pupils to think of reading as an interesting activity.

IX. Methods of Reading a Foreign Language

Reading methods can be grouped into three major categories: (I) synthetic approaches, (2) analytic approaches, and (3) eclectic approaches. Each of these approaches encompasses various reading methods, as shown in the following Figure.

A. Synthetic Approaches

Synthetic Approaches stress part-whole’ relationships and give emphasis to building meaningful words or sentences from letters, sounds and/or syllables that are mastered. In other words, the elements of reading are broken into segments in this approach. There is a heavy responsibility to learn how to “crack the code”. Synthetic approaches include several traditional reading methods. These methods are (a) the alphabetic method, (b) the phonics method, (c) the syllabic method; and (d) linguistic method.

B. Analytic Approaches:

Analytic Approaches focus on whole words and comprehension of meaning, which can be examined further for their elements. The analytic approaches include several methods: (a) the language experience approach, (b) the global method, (c) the generative word method.

C. Eclectic Approaches

Eclectic Approaches combine successful elements of both synthetic and analytic approaches in an attempt to offer pupils an effective reading program. It may include the presentation of whole sentences, identification of speech-print relationships by phonics, look-say practice with flash cards, use of the learner's own language, and a variety of other features drawn from several methods.