Reading As A Promoter Of Advanced Vocabulary

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ABSTRACT : The paper focuses on the pivotal role of vocabulary in the process of acquiring skills in Reading. The measure may be taken during the schooling can be put the use and usage of vocabulary through group activities. The sub-skills of Reading have to be taken care of while introducing vocabulary. The committed and dedicated English teachers have to introduce the word-list to the learners and give a drill to them in the usage of register. If Reading Skill is taught with the true to the spirit of the skill, the learner can survive across the globe.

KEYWORDS: reading, register, skill, activities

1. INTRODUCTION

As vocabulary is the pre-requisite of reading, the Intermediate or +2 students need to be equipped with at least 2000 words of English, their use and usage by the time they enter graduation either in general or professional courses. With the help of vocabulary, the students become independent readers. There are some Learning Strategies and Group Reading activities to cultivate the skill of reading.

Learning Strategies
In order to teach students with a view to maximizing their capability, they should be taught the technique of speeding up reading. This involves the foundation of an effective reading namely the "Searching Attitude." Michael West conceptualized this phenomenon as follows:
The efficient reader does not drift through the page, like a boat carried by the stream: he drives through it looking for something.[1]
Learners must be efficient and fast readers. They have to develop the "Searching Attitude" which will help them in their optional subjects. It saves time and increases their efficiency to find the needed information. According to Paul Varghese, an efficient reader possesses the following skills while learning to read English language:
- Ability to read fast and with good comprehension texts that are easy in language and content, or difficult texts that are familiar;
- Ability to read slowly, but with excellent comprehension, difficult texts on professional, academic and technical subjects in which he has a special interest and requires specialized knowledge;
- Ability to skim and dip;

- Ability to use works of reference; and,
- Ability to size up a book quick [2]

The Intermediate or +2 students of India have to cultivate the ability to read fast. Fast reading should go along with comprehension. Simultaneously, they should develop the skill of distinguishing between the texts to be read fast or slow. Only while reading the professional or technical texts, they need to be slow in their reading. They have to develop the sub-skills of reading such as scanning, skimming, and dipping. Dipping is the ability to read or watch only parts of the text.

A skilled reader looks for the matter or content which he wants to read specifically. If he wants only one or two points out of a mass of irrelevant matter, he skims fast and zeroes in on the specific matter, which he searches for. In this way, the reading could be speeded up by giving easier materials with fewer questions. The teacher must set this task, give needed help and check the result.

Regarding effective and fast reading, Asher Cashdan makes the following observation:

Effective reading involves two processes: the reader must establish what the writer has said, and he must follow what the writer meant. In principle, these are quite distinct; the object of the first is the linguistic 'form' of the text – what the words are and how they are put together; while the object of the second is its referent, that is, an idea, thing or event, either in a real-world or in an imaginary world, which the writer has referred to.[3]

The two demands of effective reading could be fulfilled simultaneously if the reader is effective and hones his skills. There is no need to pause at every word or at each phrase to make a conscious transition from what is said to what is meant.

For enthusiastic teachers a considerable number of techniques are available. ELT an expert like Michael West[4] provides valuable information regarding how to introduce the form of a reading lesson; West suggests the following six steps.

1. New Words
2. Questions
3. Reading
4. Checking the Answers
5. Extra Questions
6. Reading Aloud

West also gives different strategies to suit different levels. In the secondary school stage, for example, for class IX students a reading vocabulary of 500-1000 words is given in a lesson form. For higher classes, the same lesson plan can be taken with a larger vocabulary and more questions are set for such students. In this process, the intervention of the teacher is minimized.

The first step involves the teacher who gives pronunciation and meaning of new words or phrases, which the students find while reading. The second step entails the students to read with a searching attitude. It is pre-reading activity. The third step is Reading itself. In this step, the students are engaged in the Reading process to find the answers and underline them. The fourth step is checking the answers. After turning over their books, the teacher declares the answers and verifies how many students have underlined the answer for each question. The fifth step is giving extra points. Some students may find a "cue" word and pick out the answers. And they do not read with Searching Attitude. To identify such students, the teacher may ask a few questions orally as a cross-check to know their abilities of Searching Attitude and comprehension. The last

step is Reading Aloud. Finally, the teacher reads aloud one or two lines and points out those items, which are difficult and are unanswered by the students.

Group Reading Activities:
Group Reading is used effectively with dramatic scripts taken from popular novels like R.K.Narayan's *The Guide*. In this activity, the teacher reads first to produce a model and to provide the necessary support to understand it. Students read individual speeches allocated for them round the class for practice. In the group effort, recording voices on tape and playing them back is also amusing and gives learners a sense of their own progress and the areas of improvement. However, audio cassettes are particularly effective for this kind of activity, both with dramatic scripts and with stories where there is a good deal of conversation. Students can prepare themselves by listening to the cassettes first and following their books later. Then the teacher would allot parts. As the cassette is played a second time, the teacher could stop it whenever a character begins speaking that students would read the part instead. Then the recording continues so that the class can compare the students' performance with the "real thing." In this way, the recording tells the story and the students participate to improve their reading skill. This promotes Advanced Reading in English. With these activities, the learners must become independent readers of all types of reading material, which enables them to master the technique of reading. From a daily newspaper to a technical book, they would be able to use their discrimination to use these techniques of reading, sparing time judiciously.

Skills of Reading: Skimming and Scanning : Skimming and Scanning are important sub-skills of reading, and they have clearly defined goals. The goals may vary from reader to reader, as every reader assumes what he wants from the text. In skimming, the reader makes a conscious attempt and effort to construct a "macrostructure," that is, the gist or summary of the text.

E. Williams, a linguist defines the styles of reading: The styles most commonly identified in current work in second language reading are skimming (rapid reading to establish the general content of a text), Scanning (rapid reading to locate a specific point).[5]
Skimming is a style as said above. During the advanced reading, the approach of the students varies from one to another. They read a text selecting the central theme and the main ideas. The title gives a clue to the readers to get the central theme. Besides the central theme, the process, how the author justifies the title with some other main ideas are also equally important. Each paragraph has a topic the sentence, and each topic sentence would advocate for one main idea. The student skims, goes through each paragraph by using some other techniques likes bottom-up or top-down process of reading. The focus of skimming is rapid reading, but with an edge of careful reading. If this style is cultivated from class I to class X, and advanced skimming approach is reinforced to the Intermediate students and future study become easy for them. While giving training of skimming to the students, they have to develop the reading skills:

- locate the detailed information;
- identify the writer's attitude and opinion;
- understand gist and paraphrase; and,
- Skim for factual information.

Using the above-mentioned techniques, the students have to apply reading activity on the following areas:

- reading titles and sub-titles
- reading fast the topic sentence of each paragraph
- reading all the paragraphs to establish the content of the text
- reading to underline the keywords
- Identifying the markers or non-verbal expressions

The above activities are called "met cognitive" as they are above or beyond the mental process of understanding. The students could be trained to exercise all these activities to develop cognitive abilities or sharpen cognitive psychology.

Scanning is used to make a survey of material to be studied and to look through indexes, chapter headings, and outlines. It is a quick reading activity, focusing on locating some specific information. Munby calls it "Scanning to locate specifically required information."[19] Scanning involves eye movements in which the eyes move until the reader finds the piece of specific information. It is used when needed information **is required,** such as name, date, symbol, formula or phrase. A. H. Urquhart and C. J. Weir opine:

The main feature of scanning is that any part of the text which does not contain the preselected symbol (s) is dismissed. It may involve looking for specific words/phrases, figures/percentages, names, dates of particular events or specific items in an index.[6]

Scanning is used both in Intensive and Extensive Reading. If the reader wants specific information from technical, scientific or professional materials, he/she can use scanning methods. This skill is very much needed to be cultivated by the learners of English as a Second Language, as they do not usually want to read the entire or detailed text. A.H. Urquhart and C.J. Weir also opined that in the process of scanning, there is no need of paraphrasing or summarizing the text, which constitutes a macrostructure. According to them, "In scanning, there is no attempt to construct a macrostructure."[7]

Awareness of Register

Advanced vocabulary is the terminology related to the fields. The jargon of each field differs from that of any other. Banking, medical field, different engineering branches, and business management or computer field -- each has its own specific terminology or Register. The importance of vocabulary is so high that the vocabulary section is a common feature in TOEFL and other international language testing examinations.

Advanced vocabulary improves effective and efficient oral language presentation. In addition to it, it increases the likelihood that students will read with meaning and decode the text. Introduction of vocabulary at the advanced level is to be simple and feasible to students. For instance, by using the prefixes like "anti," the students would be able to make out the meaning of antidote, or antibiotic, if they are aware of the meaning of that prefix. Language the acquisition is a natural process for the human brain, which records everything it, learns. Lewis Michael in his book *The Lexical Approach* quotes, Chomsky who says:

A language acquisition device is innate, and certainly, the evidence suggests that human beings who do not suffer from a mental disorder acquire a language comparatively effortlessly, and over a relatively short period of time.[8]

It is clear that Chomsky felt that the acquisition of L2 can be achieved with a little effort; every human being can learn the second or subsequent language (L2). In the process of second or

subsequent language learning, the priority is to be given to lexis as the base for second language acquisition is lexis. Ellis, in his survey *Understanding Second Language Acquisition*, observes: Second language acquisition refers to all aspects of language that the language the learner needs to master. However, the focus has been on how L2 learners acquire grammatical sub-systems, such as negatives or interrogatives or grammatical morphemes such as the plurals or the definite and indefinite articles. Research has tended to ignore other levels of language. A little is known about L2 phonology, but almost nothing about the acquisition of lexis.[9]

Michael Lewis in his book *The Lexical Approach* says that L2 learning encounters with the "real world" situation. Sometimes, it is better than L1, but the situation must be feasible and pragmatic. These situations occur in the classrooms. He says:

Most second language acquisition, however, occurs in classrooms.[10]

As he opined, the English textbooks prescribed in the Indian states have a structural framework which is based on the principle of simple to complex. In this progressive learning, the vocabulary is supposed to be graded and comprehensive at the various stages of the students in the Indian schools and colleges. *Teaching English Class Room Issues* gives a piece of advice about the vocabulary. It says the student is supposed to know the "explanation words" and "transition words." The explanation words are:

Students should be aware of explanation words such as: is a kind of; is; is used for; etc... These indicate that what follows is a definition of the preceding word or phrase and, therefore, aid comprehension.[11]And transition words are:Transition Words, such as first, next, but, therefore, etc., give information about the organization of the article. They indicate that the following phrase or sentence adds to, contrasts or concludes the previous statements understanding their use, speeds, reading, and comprehension.[11]

2. CONCLUSION

The teacher-researchers focus on what abilities in Reading have to be developed and nurtured to the school leaver. The English teachers have to be abreast with the new trends in English language teaching such as flipped classrooms and fish-bowl methods. So that vocabulary which is the pre-requisite of Reading Skill can be developed among English language learners.

3. REFERENCES

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