

METALANGUAGE AS A COMPONENT OF READING SKILLS

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ABSTRACT Metalanguage is language used to describe or analyze language itself. It's like a language that talks about language. It can be grammatical terms: noun, verb, adjective, adverb, etc. Literary devices: metaphor, simile, personification, etc. Linguistic concepts: phoneme, morpheme, syntax, semantics, etc. Metalinguistic awareness, the ability to think about language as an object, plays a crucial role in developing strong reading skills.

Key words: Metalanguage, reading skills, language, developing, metalinguistic awareness.

Metalanguage allows us to talk about the structure, meaning, and use of language in a precise and analytical way. For example, instead of simply saying "The word 'beautiful' is an adjective," we can use metalanguage to say "The word 'beautiful' is a descriptive word that modifies a noun or pronoun." By understanding metalanguage, we can better understand how language works and how to use it effectively. By developing strong metalinguistic awareness, readers can become more skilled at analyzing, interpreting, and evaluating texts. This, in turn, leads to improved reading comprehension and critical thinking skills. Metalinguistic awareness allows readers to: Recognizing different text structures (narrative, expository, persuasive, etc.) helps readers anticipate content and organize information. Recognizing features like headings, subheadings, and visual aids helps readers navigate the text and focus on key information; Phonological

awareness: Understanding the sounds of language helps readers decode words and pronounce them correctly; Phonics: Applying knowledge of letter-sound correspondences to sound out words; Morphological awareness: Recognizing word parts (prefixes, suffixes, roots) to understand word meanings and build vocabulary. Orthographic awareness: Understanding spelling patterns and rules to accurately decode and spell words. Vocabulary knowledge: Recognizing and understanding the meanings of words, including their connotations and denotations; Syntax and grammar: Understanding sentence structure and grammar rules to comprehend the meaning of sentences and paragraphs; Text comprehension strategies: Using strategies like summarizing, questioning, predicting, and visualizing to deepen understanding. Evaluate Text: Analyzing the author's purpose, bias, and credibility; Evaluating evidence: Assessing the strength and relevance of evidence presented in the text; Identifying author's perspective: Understanding the author's point of view and how it influences the text. Metalinguistic knowledge means that the reader knows the structure of the language, how the texts are developed. Metalinguistic awareness is the ability to analyse, to talk and think about language as an object, independent of the concrete meaning of each word. Metalinguistic skills allow people to observe and control their use of language. Metalinguistic awareness is a type of metacognition, it is the skill to regard language as a code and distinguish it from its symbolic meaning. This cognitive skill also helps to understand language and its structure. Metalinguistic awareness skills can be a strong predictor of language development and ability to learn new languages. Metalinguistic awareness is important in learning to read, spell and understand words. It explains a portion of the otherwise unexplained variance in comprehension scores, when other important variables have been controlled[1]. Decoding problems are associated with phonological awareness. Phonological awareness refers to the understanding of and access to the sound structure of spoken language, that is, the consciousness that oral language can be broken down into individual words, and words into phonemes. Csépe (2006) points out that phonological awareness is the ability to break the inner structure of the word into small

parts analyze and manipulate the phonemes[2]. A main theoretical framework has been recently proposed which assumes that during reading acquisition, students learn to find shared grain sizes in orthography and in phonology [3]. Morphological awareness is also considered to be a metalinguistic skill. Morphological awareness is linked to semantic awareness. If students increase their knowledge of morphological awareness, they become aware that words which share the same root are similar in form and meaning. Morphological awareness also includes knowledge of common suffixes and prefixes [4]. Morphological awareness belongs to the cognitive processes; and as a child grows in morphological awareness, this can contribute to the child's cognitive development in general. From this point of view, it is obvious that morphological awareness supports both the development of literacy and cognitive skills, and it could also have an impact on reading comprehension skills. Students experience metalinguistic difficulties during reading activities. Recognizing syllables, words, phrases and sentence boundaries can be challenging. Ways to promote metalinguistic awareness consist of teaching multiple meanings of words. Retelling stories, identifying morphemes, teaching figurative language and humour contribute to the development of academic performance. Metalinguistic awareness is proposed to facilitate developing reading skills in different languages irrespectively of their orthographic and linguistic systems. Metalinguistic instruction can enhance the positive transfer between the mother tongue and foreign language reading skills[5]. In addition, tasks related to the meanings, structure of the words, sentences and texts foster children's thinking skills and by this they can develop into better readers in both languages.

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