

**THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHING READING STRATEGIES IN
READING COMPREHENSION PROCESS**

Halimova Sevara Oybek qizi,

halimovasevara052@gmail.com,

Student, Chirchik State Pedagogical University

Tourism faculty Foreign language and literature:(English).

Scientific supervisor: _____,

English teacher, Chirchik State Pedagogical University.

Abstract: *This study investigates the importance of teaching explicitly reading strategies to language learners to improve reading comprehension process. Unfortunately, in many language teaching programs, teaching language learning strategies is taken for granted. The importance of teaching language learning strategies is highly emphasized in many reading comprehension settings because in-depth reading comprehension is of high significance to derive information from academic texts. Therefore, the present article explores essential reading comprehension activities in terms of pre reading, reading, and post reading stages , each needs particular learning strategies to be taught by language teachers or worked by language learners through self-instruction activities. In this study, relevant ideas and empirical studies teach reading strategies to accelerate and facilitate reading comprehension are also discussed.*

Key words: *reading, synthesize, comprehend, attract students, skimming, scanning, vocabulary, strategies.*

Teaching reading is an important activity done by the teacher in the classroom. It is an activity to help the students learn to read some words and sentences by giving the knowledge about the meaning of text. It is started from teaching students how to find the topic, main idea, as well as understand about the meaning in all paragraphs in the text. The teacher should guide the students to

understand and comprehend the meaning of the text and get some new knowledge from the written text. There are some experts propose their point of view about the concept of teaching reading. In addition, teaching reading is an instruction to help the students to acquire the ability to understand the text. Teaching reading comprehension is teaching students how to derive meaning as well as analyze or synthesize what they have read. It indicates that teaching reading comprehension means not only teaching the students how to read well, but also teaching them how to gain the deep understanding from what they read. The teacher also teaches the students how the way to comprehend and catch the meaning of the text. It helps the students to understand to get the meaning of the passage.

In teaching reading, there are three main activities that should be considered by the teacher. Brown [1] argues that the activity of teaching reading includes:

1. Pre- reading activity. In this activity the students do not come into the reading activity yet, the teacher tries to activate students' knowledge about the topic being discussed. The students are led to recognize the topic and some stated information through skimming and scanning activities. The students are also guided to be familiar with some vocabularies included in the reading text. This activity is done only to attract students' interest, motivation and enthusiasm till the end of reading activity.

2. Whilst-reading activity This activity is usually assumed as the core of reading process. The students start to read the text and comprehend all information in the text. The students are also guided to identify main ideas on each paragraph, grasp all information comprehensively and try to make some clues of the vocabularies. In this activity the teacher encourages the students to focus on reading, so that the students will be easy to understand and know what they have read so far.

3. Post-reading activity. It is the end of reading section. In this activity the teacher tries to evaluate students' comprehension of the reading text. The valuation includes vocabulary, grammatical, meaning and summarizing of the author's purpose. In addition, to know these items, the teacher gives an exercise toward the students. Consequently, it can be stated that teaching reading comprehension is the

activity that is done by a teacher a language learning. The teacher will guide the students to derive meaning from what they have read. In teaching reading process, a teacher should pay attention to the three activities that will be applied, pre- reading, whilst reading, and post-teaching activity. Besides, it is also a crucial thing for the teacher to think a process of developing knowledge in reading which can help the students to transfer knowledge; how to be a good reader and realizing that reading itself should cover both understanding and comprehension.

Strategies are defined as learning techniques, behaviors, problem-solving or study skills which make learning more effective and efficient. Strategies that make learning more effective are generally referred to as learning strategies in the second language literature. Comprehension or reading strategies on the other hand, indicate how readers conceive of a task, how they make sense of what they read, and what they do when they do not understand. Grabe [2], defines a strategic reader as “one who automatically and routinely applies combinations of effective and appropriate strategies depending on reader goals, reading tasks, and strategic processing abilities”. Therefore, both cognitive and metacognitive strategies are essential to apprehend reading skills relevant for English texts comprehension. Metacognitive theory of reading is one of the most complete models of text processing emanating from cognitive psychology. It argues that metacognitive awareness is essential for skills in the reading comprehension process.

The metacognitive process of comprehension monitoring as critical to self-regulation. Learners demand appropriate knowledge of metacognitive strategies when reading in English or take reading tests because they should be engaged on assessing the situation, monitoring or determining which are the proper strategies, self-evaluating to determine how his/her performance was, and self-testing to correct mistakes. Beside cognitive strategies regarding practice, analysis, and reasons; metacognitive strategies as planning, monitoring and evaluating are required to carry out properly this study. Research has documented those students that perform better on measures of reading comprehension utilize more metacognitive strategies.

Another aspect to support learners' development of metacognitive knowledge about building main-idea comprehension is the interaction. In addition to the problems related to reading comprehension, there are other factors that have been demonstrated to have an impact on this issue, such as motivation, domain knowledge, and anxiety. In contrast to word recognition or reading speed, vocabulary requires knowledge of word meanings, and considerable techniques are available to set tasks regarding this topic.

It has been considerably mentioned the word “strategies” in this study, that is why they are definitely the foundation of this research, and their learning and application may provide students with effective tools to enhance the performance on reading comprehension texts; so it is necessary to provide learners with different types of reading strategies which allow them develop reading abilities such as “summarizing, forming questions, answering questions and elaborative interrogation, activating prior knowledge, monitoring comprehension, using text-structure awareness, using virtual graphic organizers, and inferencing”. Theory about strategies previously explained and studied leads us to focus this inquiry on strategy based instruction in English language teaching, which “refers to a form of learner-focused language teaching that explicitly combines styles and strategy training activities with everyday classroom language instruction”.

This model supports learners' decision on which strategies are suitable for a particular text in English, and whether it fits with their knowledge about the topic; Cohen [3] states that SBI helps students to select, organize and use strategies according their learning preferences so that learners can apply them in different situations. Within SBI model considerable strategies have been explored depending on contexts and learning needs, for this study a set of them was selected to be applied such as: awareness-raising preparation, teacher presentation and modeling, multiple practice opportunities, evaluation of strategy effectiveness, and transfer of strategy to new tasks. Consequently, learners might easily become skillful readers and best-trained for comprehension. The following are some strategies that would be applicable in the research context, which will be explained according to the different

stages of the reading process.

Conclusion

The present article is a brief overview of the importance of teaching reading strategies to language learners to improve and accelerate reading comprehension process. Teaching reading strategies is of great importance, particularly in language teaching contexts, in which reading comprehension is of major focus. Therefore, reading strategy instruction should be of primary focus in language teaching classes. If there is enough time in language teaching classes, language teachers should dedicate enough time to teach language learning strategies to accelerate reading comprehension process and promote in-depth reading. If there is not enough available time to teach reading strategies explicitly to the students, language teachers can provide language learners with useful supplementary materials to engage them in self-instruction strategic activities.

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