

Active Listening

Outline:

- 1- Introduction
 - 2- Basic definitions
 - 3- Active listening vs. hearing (passive listening)
 - 4- Why we want to know more about Listening
 - 5- Signs of Active Listening
 - 6- Types of listening
 - 7- Strategies for active listening
 - 8- Barriers to active listening
 - 9- Listening styles to avoid
 - 10- Conclusion
-

1-Introduction

Listening is one of the most important skills you can have. How well you listen has a major impact on your learning, the quality of your relationships with others, and on job effectiveness.

In lectures, students are expected to work harder than teachers, because teachers are supposed to know what they talk about, and students are less knowledgeable about topics.

“I attend lectures, but I can’t catch what the teacher says,” a student complains. This means that the frequency of class attendance does not match the quality of classroom learning (useless notes).

We spend 45% of our communication time in listening; 30 % in speaking; 16 % in reading; and 9 % in writing. We remember only 25 % of what we hear after two days.

Are you a good listener? How many times you should listen to answer some silly questions? Is there any difference between hearing and listening?

2-Basic Definitions

A- Hearing

Hearing involves receiving sound waves through our ears, which transmit them through the hearing mechanism. These sound waves (vibrations) are sent to the brain for interpretation. It is in this stage that hearing and listening differ.

B- Listening:

It is the process of receiving, attending, understanding, responding and remembering (Fujishin, 2009)

So, while hearing can be a passive process, listening involves considerable brain activity. Listening requires the presence of the brain which must be actively working upon the words being heard. That is, carrying out cognitive functions like analysing, classifying, interpreting, etc.

All in all, we can say that active listening means listening actively, concentrating on what is being said rather than passively hearing the message of the speaker (passive listening).

3-Active listening vs. hearing (passive listening)

| Features | Active listening | Hearing |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| Nature | skill (can be developed) attentional process (purposeful) conscious active | sense physiological process subconscious passive |
| Communication | a two-way mode | a one-way mode |
| Reaction | verbal / nonverbal | none |
| Effort | Effortful | effortless |
| Cognitive processes | analyse, evaluate, summarise ... | none |

4-Why we want to know more about Listening

There are many reasons that can explain why we want to understand listening. These include:

- understand the factors that effect listening abilities
- use effective strategies to improve our performance
- develop skills for note taking / communication

So, good (active) listening maximizes understanding, a good listener becomes a good note taker

5-Signs of Active Listening

Active listening involves as well showing interest in listening to speaker through verbal / non verbal messages (behaviours)

a-nonverbal signs: smile, eye contact, head nodding, facial expression, mirroring (automatic reflection of the speaker's facial expressions), body language, posture, gesture, etc.

b-verbal signs: positive reinforcement (words of encouragement; yes, indeed, good...), questions, reflection, clarification (to ensure correct understanding), summarisation (repeating main elements to the speaker to correct if necessary), comments, etc.

6-Types of listening

- a- *Appreciative listening*: to listen for enjoyment and pleasure. A good example is listening to music, especially as a way to relax. Other examples may include a joke, a story, an actor in a play...
- b- *Empathetic (therapeutic) listening*: to listen to understand and relate to the speaker's feelings, emotions, desires and wishes without interruption (stops or questions). Its goal is to comfort the speaker and relieve his or her psychological pains.
- c- *Critical listening*: to listen to understand, interpret, examine, and analyze the speaker's message. Its goal is to evaluate what is being said (needs some previous knowledge).
- d- *Active listening*: to listen with full attention and focus in order to understand and learn new knowledge, especially, in educational settings as in lectures, labs, conferences, conversations, small groups discussions, etc.
- e- *Rapport listening*: when trying to build rapport with others we can engage in a type of listening that encourages the other person to trust and like us. A salesman, for example, may make an effort to listen carefully to what you are saying as a way to promote trust and potentially make a sale. This type of listening is common in situations of negotiation
- f- *Informational listening*: Whenever you listen to gain novel information. This is true in many day-to-day situations, at work, when you listen to the news, watch a documentary, when a friend tells you a recipe or when you are talked-through a technical problem with a computer.

7-Strategies for active listening

- a- create a clear listening goal: intention to listen to learn, show positive attitude towards the module, the subject, the speaker ...
- b- familiarise yourself with the topic before class: consult the syllabus, previous lectures, concepts, terminology...

- c- use concentration strategies: eliminate as many external and internal distractors as possible to free up the working memory space
- d- keep an open mind: avoid prejudging information or speaker; set personal opinions aside
- e- express an interest in the topics through verbal and nonverbal messages
- f- participate in the learning process: ask questions, respond to questions, do an activity ...

8-Barriers to active listening

- a- *Physical*: noise, location (from speaker) light, temperature, furniture, etc.
- b- *Physiological*: sickness, fatigue, sleeplessness, hearing problems, hunger, etc.
- c- *Psychological*: stress, anger, anxiety, fear, daydreaming, assumption about speaker or subject, having a problem, etc.
- d- *cognitive*: difference between speech and thought rate, lack of preparation, poorly structured message, etc.

9-Listening styles to avoid

- a- refusing to listen (deliberately)
- b- pseudo-listening (pretending to listen): despite the existence of nonverbal behaviors (posture, eye contact, nodding, appropriate facial expressions), there is no attempt or desire to receive, attend to or understand the speaker's message. Sometimes, it is used as a politeness strategy with people who repeat stories.
- c- listening to evaluate: the focus is on judging the speaker's message (positively or negatively) rather than listening and trying to understand his opinions, feelings, thoughts. Judging does not encourage understanding; it hinders communication.
- d- selective listening: this negative type of listening implies that the listener is somehow biased to what they are hearing. Bias can be based on preconceived ideas or emotionally difficult communications. Selective listening is a sign of failing communication as we listen and respond to subjects we are interested in and skip the rest.
- e- narcissistic listening: self-centred listening (focus on the self).
- f- aggressive listening: a type of listening used to attack the speaker.

10-Conclusion

Active listening involves listening with all senses and giving full attention to the speaker. It is beneficial for the speaker and the listener alike. So, being an 'active listener' is one of the prerequisites for any successful student as it is an indispensable means for maximising learning.

Building Vocabulary

Outline:

1. Words in numbers
 2. Origins of English vocabulary
 3. What is vocabulary?
 4. Benefits of learning new words
 5. Types of vocabulary
 6. Structure of vocabulary
 7. Aspects of knowing a new word
 8. Strategies for vocabulary learning
 9. Extra info
-

“While without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed.”

David Arthur Wilkins

“Words are important. If you cannot say what you mean, you will never mean what you say. And you should always mean what you say.”

George Bernard Shaw

1. Words in numbers

- English language has above a million words.
- 2000 words are enough to understand English.
- Only 2,500 words make up about 80 % of everything we hear or write.
- An average educated speaker has a vocabulary of about 20,000 words, but he or she uses far fewer.
- An average native English speaker uses around 2000 words.
- Shakespeare used around 30,000 words in his writing.

2. Origins of English vocabulary

- a) Over half of all English words come from Latin (school).
- b) 12 % of words originally come from Greek (theatre).
- c) Many words also come from:

- ✓ French: education
- ✓ Chinese: typhoon (a tropical storm)
- ✓ Finnish: sauna (a room used as a steam bath)
- ✓ Gujarati (Indian state of Gujarat): bungalow
- ✓ Turkish: kiosk
- ✓ Arabic: sugar (سكر)



3. What is vocabulary?

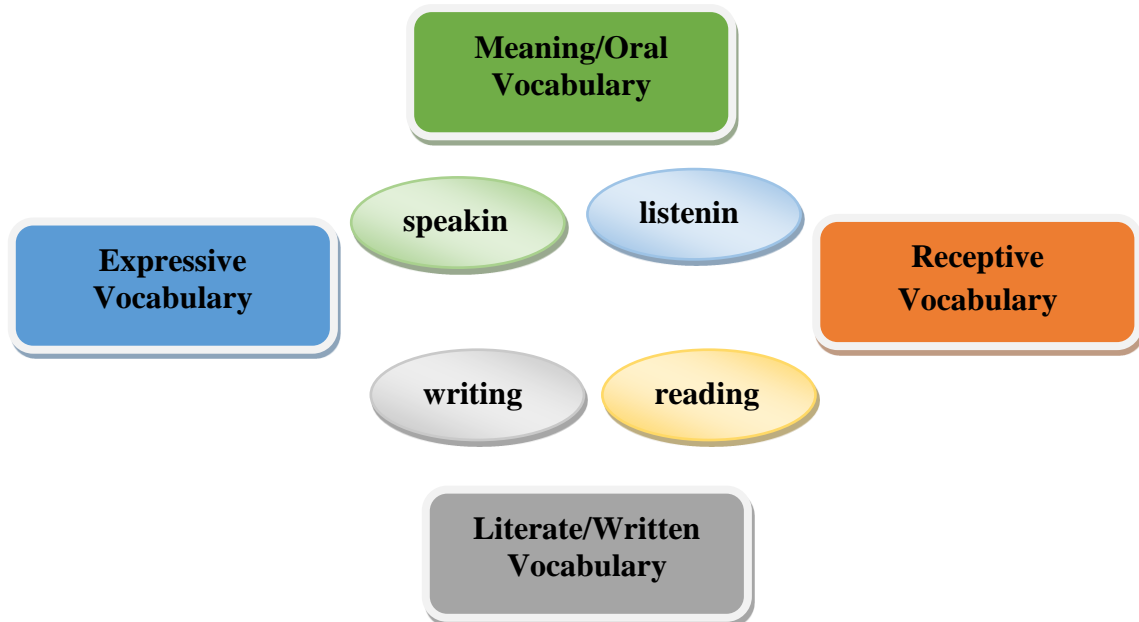
- Vocabulary refers to all the words known and used by a particular person, or all the words used in a particular subject or language. (we cannot say ‘a vocabulary’)
- Knowing a word, however, is not as simple as merely being able to recognise or use it.
- Vocabulary usually develops with age, and serves as a useful and fundamental tool for communication and acquiring knowledge.
- Vocabulary is the glue that holds stories, ideas, and content together, making comprehension accessible for one and all.

4. Benefits of learning new words

- The more words you know, the better you can express yourself (communication).
- Ability to interpret the world
- Become a better writer
- Achieve better academic career

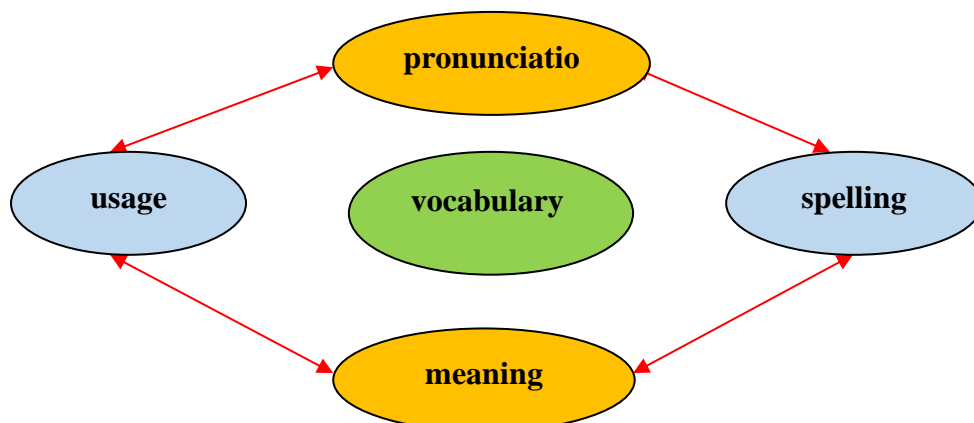
- More success at work
- Become a better public speaker
- Gain the respect of people

5. Types of vocabulary



- ❖ **Reading** vocabulary is all the words a person can recognise when reading. This is generally the largest type of vocabulary simply because a person tends to be exposed to more words by reading than by listening.
- ❖ **Listening** vocabulary is all the words a person can recognise when listening to speech. People may still understand words they were not exposed to before using cues such as tone, gestures, the topic of discussion and the social context of the conversation.
- ❖ **Speaking** vocabulary is all the words a person uses in speech. It is likely to be a subset of the listening vocabulary.
- ❖ **Writing** vocabulary is all the words used in various forms of writing from formal essays to Twitter feeds. Many written words do not commonly appear in speech.

6. Structure of vocabulary



7. Aspects of knowing a new word

- + Understanding its meaning
- + Knowing how to put it into a sentence
- + Knowing when to use it (style and register)
- + Knowing if it is formal or informal (slang, taboo)
- + Knowing if it is common or unusual
- + Being able to spell it
- + Recognising it when you hear it said
- + Being able to pronounce it (use CD-ROM)

8. Strategies for vocabulary learning

a. *Choosing a dictionary*

- two types: specialist or general language dictionaries
- a general language dictionary can be: monolingual or bilingual
- a monolingual dictionary forces you to think in English, so you are improving your English even as you study
- electronic (CD-ROMs) and online dictionaries
- thesaurus: lists of words that have similar meanings
- (the most famous one in Britain is Roget's Thesaurus)

b. *Learn through context*

- learn new words by reading them in texts and by trying to understand them from the contexts in which they occur.
- read texts that reflect your interest
- after you meet a new word, be ready to recognise examples of it in other texts (more exposure)

c. *Plan your vocabulary learning*

- How many words do you intend to learn each day?
- Where are you going to learn them?
- Which material are you going to read?
- How often are you going to revise them?

d. *Identify word parts*

- roots: knowing some of the most commonly used roots gives you access to many words at once. For example, the word root cogn- means to know (recognise)
- prefixes: the word part placed at the beginning of a word. For example, review (re = again) + (view)
- suffixes: the word part placed at the end of a word. For example, economic (economy + ic)

e. Synonyms and antonyms

- a synonym: a word which is similar or the same meaning
- an antonym: a word which means the opposite
- your previous knowledge of words helps you know the structure of newly learnt words and their use.
- thesaurus can be a good help

f. Homophones and homographs

- homophones are two or more words that sound alike but spelled differently and have different meanings: their, there, and they're / to, too, two.
- homographs are words which are spelled alike but have two different meanings: close, close

g. Context Clues

- use context clues to help you determine the meaning of an unknown word from context: definition, mood, inference, example, experience...
- context clues expose you to more linguistic input

h. Learning aids

- word association: words associated through meaning are learnt together
- pictures (human body) and diagrams (word tree)
- tables
- matrices
- word class (verbs, nouns / using different colours)
- semantic (word) maps
- cards: word on one side/ meaning on other side
- tech tools: podcasts, audiolibrary, anki (flash cards)

i. Vocabulary notebook and revision

- have a notebook for recording all your newly learnt words
- organise your notebook in a way that facilitates access and revision
- carry your notebook wherever you go
- frequent exposure to words helps memorise them
- use spaced learning to revisit and consolidate your new vocabulary

j. Making the new words active

- use the words you learnt in meaningful sentences
- try to write sentences that relate to your life and needs
- make a point of using the new words in your next class or homework or exam
- watch out for your new words in your general reading
- write a paragraph or story using and linking the words you learnt together

9. Extra info

- ✓ The shortest and most commonly used word is “I.”
- ✓ The longest word refers to a type of lung disease:
Pneumonoultramicroscopicsilicovolcanoconiosis. (25 letters)
- ✓ Swims will be swims even when turned upside down.
- ✓ A pangram sentence is one that contains every letter in the language: “The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.”
- ✓ The shortest complete sentence is “I am.”
- ✓ Crutch words are unnecessary words that we use to fill the dead spaces while speaking such as: well, you know, obviously, so, and actually.

Context Clues

Outline:

1. Introduction
 2. Definition
 3. When to use clues
 4. Types of clues
 5. Conclusion
-

1. Introduction

Learning the meaning of a word through its use in a sentence or paragraph is the most practical way to build vocabulary, since a dictionary is not always available when a reader encounters an unknown word.

Reminder!!

A reader must be aware that many words have several possible meanings. Only by being sensitive to the circumstances in which a word is used can the reader decide upon an appropriate definition to fit the context.

2. Definition

Context clues are hints found within a sentence, paragraph, or passage that a reader can use to understand the meanings of new or unfamiliar words.

3. When to use clues

A reader should rely on context clues when an obvious clue to meaning is provided, or when only a general sense of the meaning is needed for the reader's purposes.

Context clues should not be used when:

- a precise meaning is required,
- clues suggest several possible definitions,
- nearby words are unfamiliar, and when
- the unknown word is a common one that will be needed again.

In these cases, a dictionary should be consulted.

4. Types of clues

There are several different types of context clues. Here are some of them:

a. *Definition /Description Clue*

The new term may be formally defined, or sufficient explanation may be given within the sentence or in the following sentence. Clues to definition include “that is, namely, is defined as...” commas, dashes, and parentheses.

Example:

- ✓ His emaciation, that is, his skeleton-like appearance, was frightening to see.
- ✓ “Skeleton-like appearance” is the definition of “emaciation.”

b. *Example Clue*

Sometimes when a reader finds a new word, an example might be found nearby that helps to explain its meaning. Words like “including, such as, and for example...” point out example clues.

Example:

- ✓ Celestial bodies, including the sun, moon, and stars, have fascinated man through the centuries.
- ✓ “Celestial” objects are those in the sky or heavens.

c. *Synonym / Restatement Clue*

The reader may discover the meaning of an unknown word because it repeats an idea expressed in familiar words nearby. In other words, that is; commas, dashes, and parentheses are used.

Example:

- ✓ Flooded with spotlights—the focus of all attention—the new Miss America began her year-long reign. She was the cynosure of all eyes for the rest of the evening.
- ✓ “Cynosure” means “the focus of all attention.”

d. *Contrast /Antonym Clue*

An opposite meaning context clue contrasts the meaning of an unfamiliar word with the meaning of a familiar term. Words like “although,” “however,” and “but” may signal contrast clues.

Example:

- ✓ When the light brightens, the pupils of the eyes contract; however, when it grows darker, they dilate.
- ✓ “Dilate” is the opposite of “contract.”

e. *Mood /Tone Clue*

The author sets a mood, and the meaning of the unknown word must harmonize with this mood.

Examples:

- ✓ When the children at the birthday party saw the cake, the balloons and the clown, they were ecstatic.
- ✓ “ecstatic,” which means “delighted and jumping for joy,” fits into the mood set by the words “party,” “cake,” and “balloons.”

f. Experience Clue

Sometimes a reader knows from experience how people or things act in a given situation. This knowledge provides the clue to a word’s meaning.

Examples:

- ✓ During those first weeks at university, the thoughts of a freshman go back to high school where he was “in,” knew everyone, and felt at home. A feeling of nostalgia sweeps over him.
- ✓ “Nostalgia” means a sentimental longing for the past

g. Word Structure /Analysis Clue

The parts used to construct a word can be direct clues to meaning. Knowledge of roots, prefixes, and suffixes can aid a reader in using this type of context clue. Learning one word part can add dozens of words to a reader’s vocabulary. The power of word parts lies in the ability to combine the roots and affixes with the context in which a word is used to discover the author’s meaning.

Examples:

- ✓ The story is incredible.
- ✓ The root “cred” means “to believe,” and the prefix “in” means “not.” Therefore, if a story is incredible, it is unbelievable.

h. Inference Clue

Sufficient clues might be available for the careful reader to make an educated guess at the meaning.

Example:

- ✓ She told her mother, “It was a dull meeting! I was bored every minute. The conversation was absolutely vapid .”
- ✓ “Vapid” means “uninteresting.”

i. Cause and Effect Clue

The author explains the reason for or the result of the word. Words like “because,” “since,” “therefore,” “thus,” “so,” etc. may signal context clues.

Example:

- ✓ She wanted to impress all her dinner guests with the food she served, so she carefully studied the necessary culinary arts.
- ✓ “Culinary” means “food preparation.”

5. Conclusion

Context clues constitute a vital strategy that language learners can use to guess the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary. They are there to help them make sense of the text and carry out different activities that relate to comprehension. Students need to systematically learn to use these tools effectively for the sake of responding to written texts and learning new vocabulary.

Time for practice

Task: Underline the part of the sentence that helps you find the meaning of the word in bold, and then write an appropriate definition to it. Use context clues!

- a. The man who used to be very **lax** with the rules, now follows all the laws.
Definition:
- b. The **comestibles**, including a huge pizza, a birthday cake, chocolate-covered peanuts, and tasty hot dogs, were all in the fridge before my birthday party.
Definition:
- c. She was so **erratic** that she would be in a great mood one minute and crying the next. You never could predict the way she would act.
Definition:
- d. The **brawl**, or fight, on the playground got both kids sent to the principal.
Definition:

Being an Effective Reader

(Reading Skills and Styles)

Outline:

1. Introduction
 2. Definition
 3. Purpose of reading
 4. Importance of reading
 5. Reading skills
 6. Reading styles (Types)
 - 6.1. Skimming
 - 6.2. Scanning
 - 6.3. Deep study reading
 - 6.4. Extensive reading
 - 6.5. Intensive reading
 - 6.6. Browsing
 7. Conclusion
-

1. Introduction

Reading is a getaway (window) to a whole universe of learning and enjoyment. Reading offers us a big opportunity to interact with a variety of a written texts (material) such as books, newspapers, magazines, stories, manuals, poems, textbooks, article, instructions, computers, screens, etc., for different purposes ranging from reading for school, for fun, for a specific piece of knowledge, etc. For some readers, this skill (activity) is easy; for others, it is a hard task. This is mainly noticeable in schools and colleges where students face great hardships reading for study. Therefore, teachers should be aware of this, and should instruct their students on how to become effective readers.

Researchers agree that reading is a complex process that involves a number of operations. However, when we read in a second language (or foreign language), the process is even more complex because of the cognitive capacities and first language interference with second language.

2. Definition

There are many definitions given to the term *reading*:

- Reading is the process of receiving and interpreting information encoded in language form via the medium of print.
- Reading is an active, fluent process which involves the reader and the reading materials in building meaning, (Anderson, 1999)
- Reading is converting print into language and then to the message intended by the author, (Koda, 2007)
- Reading is the process of extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language. It consists of three elements: the reader, the text, and the activity or purpose for reading, (R and Reading, Study Group, 2002)

All these definitions have at their core the term “meaning” which reflects deliberate engagement in thinking processes by readers. However, the construction of “meaning” is influenced mainly by two factors: the kind of text being read and its contents, and by the purpose of reading .

Other researchers claim that other factors are vital for getting meaning from written material. These include the reader’s prior knowledge and experiences, the nature of the reading. Whatever the type of the written text is, researchers agree that different kinds of written works require different skills to read them. Hence, students need to know the essential elements of distinct kinds of writing they are likely to be asked to read in order to read well at university courses. Knowing the purpose of reading is a key element to more active, effective reading.

3. Purpose of reading

The purpose is the **WHY** of the reading plan. Knowing the reason for which you are reading, can help you find a focus. The purpose can be determined by the reader himself or his instructor. Here are some:

a- *reading to comprehend an idea*: to understand a new idea or concept or a new way to solve a problem.

b- *reading to connect ideas together*: all reading tells a story, and when you read you can understand how individual parts of the story connect to one another; how things are interconnected logic.

c- *reading to learn more*: sometimes, we need to get a general picture of something as part of lesson or assignment. But, later we may want to read more about that idea or concept (reading on our own)

d- *reading for a test*: although this is an essential activity, it cannot be a primary purpose for reading. We must read to learn first, then read to test our knowledge.

be a Prime music purpose for reading we must read Children First than read text our knowledge.

e- *reading to appreciate literature*: it is necessary to read fiction, such as novels, poetry, or plays to learn about the customs traditions, and culture of other peoples which facilitates tolerance and understanding between nations and cultures.

f- *reading for pleasure (fun)*: some people like reading for their own pleasure. Genres and types of writing may vary from reader to another (science fiction, horror, romance ...)

4. Importance of reading

Reading is important because it:

a- *develops the mind*: the mind is a muscle which needs exercise. When you read you engage in various mental process to understand meaning. Thus, the more you read, the more your cognitive abilities and skills grow.

b- *develops imagination*: with reading, you can go anywhere in the world or even out of it. This world of imagination shows you that nothing is impossible. You can experience new things and view the world from different angles. This boosts creativity and the power of prediction.

c- *improves self-image*: when you read, your understanding of the world develops. This enhances your self-esteem and improves your self-confidence. It builds your personality and shapes your thought and attitudes.

d- *develops knowledge, skills and strategies*: the more we engage in the reading activity, the more we gain knowledge and experience, the more we improve our reading skills and strategies (ever-lasting training)

e- *is a good communication tool*: messages transmitted through reading enable us to communicate better with people either through writing or orally. People who can't read (illiterate) can be easily controlled and manipulated.

5. Reading Skills

A reading Skill is an acquired ability to do well; proficiency. The use of a skill is effortless and automatic (habit). It is also referred to as an ability or capacity acquired through deliberate systematic, and sustained effort to carry out complex activities. There are many reading skills:

- previewing (* predicting / anticipating)
- constructing mental images
- summarising
- concentrating
- adjusting speed
- looking for signposts
- explaining to someone
- re-reading
- reading critically
- forming / answering questions
- making associations (connections)
- using graphic organisers
- making annotations
- reading selectively
- testing by reading
- underlining / highlighting
- inferring

N.B. * predicting: say what the text will be about before reading

* anticipating: activate prior knowledge to comprehend the text.

The benefits of reading skills include, among many others, maximising understanding, saving and managing time effectively, enhancing fluent reading, and improving reading scores (IELTS, CELTA, TOFEL...).

6. Reading Styles (Types)

There are six major reading styles.

6.1. Skimming

Skimming is reading for gist. Skim reading is useful when we want to get a quick impression or general overview /idea of a book or article, etc.

Skimming refers to the way of reading in which readers quickly run their eyes across a text for its gist. It is useful when we have to read a large amount of material in a short amount of time, or have to review information.

Use: look for “signposts”: chapter headings, sub-headings, lists, figures, read first/last paragraphs, read first / last sentences of a paragraph, make notes of key words, phrases and points to summarise the main themes. Ignore the detail contained in supporting sentences. Try to answer the five Ws: Who, What, Where, When, Why.

6.2. Scanning

Scanning is reading for specific information. It is useful when we want to locate quickly specific piece of information within a reading material without necessarily reading through the whole material. In scanning we know what we are looking for, that’s why we don’t need to pay attention to other information. Let your eyes move quickly over the text to spot key words and phrases, when pupils read a text to look for an answer to a question posed by their teacher, they are in fact scanning.

Use: Run your eyes down the page, look for bold-face point, italics, or any other terms which stand out from the surrounding text. Focus on numbers, places, names, questions, notes in margins. Focus on finding the answer.

Scanning saves you time, and can be combined with skimming to maximize comprehension. For example, searching through a telephone directory or reading an advertisement are two good examples of scanning technique.

6.3. Deep study reading

Deep study reading is reading to learn. It is also called *in-depth reading*, *detailed reading*, *detail reading*, and *careful reading*. It’s useful when want to extract accurate information, make connections, understand concepts and meanings, consider implications, and evaluate arguments. The reader attempts to handle detailed information in the text which can be complex and difficult to comprehend such as school/college subject. That is why the reading rate (speed) seems to be

slower than in skimming or scanning, and readers often require reading and ? to connect information with background knowledge. Sometimes, reading the material aloud is quite beneficial to achieve in-depth understanding. Many researchers argue that reading deeply requires a strategic approach and time cogitate (reflect/ think deeply about something). Reading strategies, e.g., SQ3R, promote deeper and more thoughtful understanding because they think thinking with reading in a flexible manner.

Use: Survey contents, titles, chapters. Analyze the title (what you already know and what's the purpose of the text) read the text word for word, do not skip words, use the dictionary to explain new words. Take notes, review what you learnt, read aloud your notes, test your understanding.

6.4. Extensive reading

Extensive reading is reading as much material as possible for pleasure and general language development. It involves reading silently, quickly, and at one's pace/speed. This type of reading is useful for improving student's word recognition, fluency, speed and inference skills. (reading longer texts often for pleasure and overall understanding). Within extensive reading, students choose what they read according to their level and interests, read (generally out of class) independently of a teacher, can skip whole parts or just stop reading whenever they consider the material not interesting or too difficult. In addition, students don't need to use their dictionaries, because they focus is on the meaning (comprehension of the main topic), and are not required to do any tasks after reading. However, teachers can assign activities to students to check their understanding such as interviewing (reading versus speaking), reporting (reading versus writing) summarising, retelling parts of the text, book project, etc.

Extensive reading can be carried out through graded readers or simplified, texts on the same topic, authentic materials (newspapers versus magazines), stories, articles, web sources, etc. (fiction / non-fiction books)

Generally, extensive reading aims at building reader confidence and enjoyment, and general understanding. In short, extensive reading is about “**learning to read.**” It can be introduced to all kinds of EFL classes.

6.5. Intensive reading

Intensive reading (or narrow reading) is reading a limited piece of writing slowly and slightly with specific learning aims and tasks. It may involve students reading selections by the same author or several texts about the same topic. When this occurs, content and grammatical structures repeat themselves and students may get opportunities to understand the meanings of the text.

The more familiar the reader is with the text, the more comprehension is promoted. Intensive readers must read carefully to remember the details and understand all the words and meaning of the text, are supposed to use dictionaries, and employ various reading styles such as skimming and scanning. Intensive reading is generally directed by the teacher whose rule is an

organiser, observer, feedback provider, and prompter. It is also a classroom-based activity wherein students focus on linguistic and semantic details.

Intensive reading aims at building more language knowledge than practicing the skill of reading? Intensive reading is about “**reading to learn.**” It is carried out in very short texts (about 500-words long) chosen by the teacher considering the level of difficulty. (reading shorter texts for detailed information with emphasis and precise understanding). Activities may include finding main ideas, making inferences, identifying words, answering questions, etc.

6.6. Browsing

Browsing is reading for no specific goals. It involves taking a boarder view of the subject, which in turn provides you with a stronger base that can be developed through specific reading. We often browse magazines or newspapers just for fun. Still, browsing enables us to build up a sense of how languages fit together, and to enrich our knowledge of various topics like culture, politics, sports etc.

7. Conclusion

Reading is one of the major language skills that needs constant improvement through the use of useful skills, styles and strategies. It affects the other language skills and boosts comprehension and critical thinking. On that basis, students should strive to develop their reading techniques to enhance comprehension and ensure more effective communication inside or outside university.

Time for practice

Task: Identify the reading styles required in the following reading situations: (There is sometimes not a single correct answer, several choices may be possible according to your reading purpose. If you find that there are different possibilities, state the situation in which you would use the various styles.)

| | | |
|----|---|-------------------------|
| 1 | The TV guide for Friday evening | Scanning |
| 2 | An English grammar book | Intensive |
| 3 | An article in National Geographic magazine about the Roman Empire | Extensive |
| 4 | A good friend`s homepage on the Internet | Skimming |
| 5 | The opinion page in your local newspaper | Scanning / Skimming |
| 6 | The weather report in your local newspaper | Scanning |
| 7 | A novel | e.g., extensive reading |
| 8 | A poem | Intensive |
| 9 | A bus timetable | Scanning |
| 10 | A fax at the office | Skimming |
| 11 | An advertising email – so called 'spam' | Skimming |
| 12 | An email or letter from your best friend | Intensive |
| 13 | A recipe | Intensive |
| 14 | A short story by your favourite author | Extensive |

Being an Effective Reader

(Reading Strategies)

Outline :

1. Introduction
 2. Definition of a Strategy
 3. Reading Strategies
 - 3.1. SQ3R
 - 3.2. SQRW
 - 3.3. REDW
 4. Conclusion
-

1. Introduction

Reading is the active process of understanding print and graphic texts; it is a thinking process. Effective readers know that when they read, what they read is supposed to make sense. They monitor their understanding, and when they lose the meaning of what they are reading, they often unconsciously select and use a reading strategy that will help them reconnect with the meaning of the text. Reading strategies can be taught explicitly while students are learning subject-specific content through authentic reading tasks. Effective readers use strategies to understand what they read before, during, and after reading.

2. Definition of a Strategy

First, it is a good idea to know what strategy means. In fact, this term has various definitions. Here are some of them:

- In a broad sense, a strategy refers to an established, habitual, logical or prescribed practice or systematic process of achieving certain ends in an ordered sequence of steps.
- In education, it means a systematic plan, consciously adapted and monitored, to improve one's performance in learning.

The use of a strategy is a deliberate, conscious, meta-cognitive act. However, when the strategy becomes effortless and automatic, it becomes a skill.

3. Reading Strategies

As students progress through university, they are asked to read increasingly complex informational and graphical texts in their courses. The ability to understand and use the information in these texts is key to a student's success in learning. Successful students have a repertoire of strategies to draw upon, and know how to use them in different contexts. Below is an explanation of three major reading strategies: **SQ3R**, **SQRW**, and **REDW**.

a. **SQ3R**

SQ3R is a popular reading/study formula designed to help process and increase retention of written information and to strengthen students' reading muscles. One of its greatest benefits is that it helps students understand more of what they are reading, especially if they are reading a material for the first time. This strategy is very useful when reading textbooks or chapters of books. It is named for its five steps: survey, question, read, recite, and review.

- **Survey:** before you start reading, glance through (or survey) the passage to identify the subject matter, the point of view, and the overall purpose of the passage. In very few minutes, try to:
 - Survey the chapter title, headings and subheadings, captions under pictures, charts, graphs or maps, diagrams,
 - Skim the first sentence of every paragraph, the introductory and concluding paragraphs, chapter objectives, and summary (if available),
 - Survey the questions, too! Put marks in the margins of the passage if you see questions that mention "paragraph 3" or "lines 11-18", for example,
 - Circle weird names and big words in the questions to increase the chances that you will remember that the word or idea is important when you come across it in the passage.
 - Notice reading aids such as italics, boldface print, underlining, etc.
- **Question:** while you are surveying, come up with a couple of questions about the passage to get more excited about what you are about to read. Even in less than the time devoted to the first stage, do the following:
 - Turn the titles, headings, and subheading into questions,
 - Read the questions at the end of each chapter or after each subheading,
 - Ask yourself some questions like: What did the teacher say about this chapter or subject? What do I already know about this topic? What is this passage about? Why does this passage exist? What question is this passage trying to answer?

Note: You can write down these questions for consideration

- **Read (R1):** start reading the passage actively. Use the following tips:

- Read each section with your questions in mind looking for answers.
- Notice underlined, italicised, bold-printed words, phrases or sentences,
- Study graphic aids (graphs, charts, tables, diagrams, drawings, etc.,)
- Reread captions under pictures or photos,
- Underline or highlight key words and major claims,
- Reduce your reading speed for difficult passages,
- Read aloud some passages for better engagement,
- Stop and reread difficult items several times,
- Read only one section at a time,
- Make quick notes in the margins of the passage using these keys:

- ✚ Numbers for lists, enumerations and sequences,
- ✚ Asterisks for individual main points,
- ✚ Vertical lines for the main points of several lines,
- ✚ Recall phrases to condense major points and details,
- ✚ Abbreviation “Def” for definitions,
- ✚ Circles or boxes for main concepts, ideas, etc.,
- ✚ Parentheses for examples,
- ✚ ? or ! to react to what you read (agree, disagree...)

Hint!!

The most important claims and conclusions are usually found in the first and last sentences of a paragraph. On your first read-through, pay more attention to the bones of the passage, and less attention to the evidence that backs up those claims and conclusions. If you understand the structure of the passage first, you will know where to find the supporting evidence you need if and when you are asked about it.

- **Recite (R2):** this is the most important part of effective reading. The second "R" stands for recite—in your own words. After you read each paragraph, say back to yourself what it was about using your own words. Use these tips:

- Ask yourself questions about what you have just read,
- Underline and highlight important words you have just read,
- Take notes from the text and write them in own your own words,
- Summarise in your own words what you read for better encoding and retrieval,
- Write a summary sentence for each paragraph,
- Use recall cues in margins,
- Recite the answers loud to yourself,

Hint!!

The more senses you use the more you are likely to remember what you read. Triple strength learning involves seeing, saying, and hearing; quadruple strength learning involves seeing, saying, hearing, and writing.

➤ **Review (R3):** it is important to review the material you read to understand and remember it. Once you reach the end of the passage, say back to yourself what the point of the whole passage is—again, using your own words. The following cues are useful:

- Reread each main heading,
- Review the underlined and highlighted material,
- In the margins, write questions for those notes you have highlighted or underlined,
- Go back over the questions you created for every heading. Using your reading notes, see if you can still answer them,
- If not, look back and refresh your memory and then continue,
- Page through your notes to re-acquaint yourself with the main points,
- Ask yourself questions about the notes and answer them orally from memory,
- Develop mnemonic devices for your notes to remember them (acronyms, flash cards, concept maps, mind maps, tree diagram,
- Periodically, review your notes to avoid cramming during tests.

Hint!!

Remember that *review* is an ongoing process. Therefore, you should go through your notes on a regular basis for more effective memory storage and retrieval. Reviewing each time you study will eliminate the need to “cram” for a test.

b. SQRW

SQRW is a four-step strategy **for reading and taking notes from chapters in a textbook**. Each letter stands for one step in the strategy. Using SQRW will help you to understand what you read and to prepare a written record of what you learned. The written record will be valuable when you have to participate in a class discussion and again when you study for a test. Read to learn what to do for each step in SQRW.

- **Survey: surveying** brings to mind what you already know about the topic of a chapter and prepares you for learning more. To survey a chapter, read the title, introduction, headings, and the summary or conclusion. Also, examine all visuals such as pictures, tables, maps, and/or graphs and read the caption that goes with each. By surveying a chapter, you will quickly learn what the chapter is about.
- **Question:** you need to have **questions** in your mind as you read. Questions give you a purpose for reading and help you stay focused on the reading assignment. Form questions by changing each chapter heading into a question. Use the words who, what, when, where, why, or how to form questions. For example, for the heading "Uses of Electricity" in a chapter about how science improves lives, you might form the question "What are some uses of electricity?" If a heading is stated as a question, use that question. When a heading contains more than one idea, form a question for each idea. Do not form questions for the Introduction, Summary, or Conclusion.
- **Read:** the information that follows each heading to find the answer to each question you formed. As you do this, you may decide you need to change a question or turn it into

several questions to be answered. Stay focused and flexible so you can gather as much information as you need to answer each question.

- **Write: write** each question and its answer in your notebook. Reread each of your written answers to be sure each answer is legible and contains all the important information needed to answer the question.

As you practice using SQRW, you will find you learn more and have good study notes to use to prepare for class participation and tests.

Hint!!

Once you complete the Survey step for the entire chapter, complete the Question, Read, and Write steps for the first heading. Then complete the Question, Read, and Write steps for the second heading, and so on for the remaining headings in the chapter.

c. REDW

REDW is a good strategy to use to find the main idea in each paragraph of a reading assignment. Using this strategy will help you comprehend the information contained in your assignment. Each of the letters in REDW stands for a step in the strategy.

- **Read:** the entire paragraph to get an idea of what the paragraph is about. You may find it helpful to whisper the words as you read or to form a picture in your mind of what you are reading. Once you have a general idea of what the paragraph is about, go on to the next step.
- **Examine:** each sentence in the paragraph to identify the important words that tell what the sentence is about. Ignore the words that are not needed to tell what the sentence is about. If you are allowed to, draw a line through the words to be ignored. For each sentence, write on a sheet of paper the words that tell what the sentence is about.
- **Decide:** reread the words you wrote for each sentence in the paragraph. Decide which sentence contains the words you wrote that best describe the main idea of the paragraph. These words are the main idea of the paragraph. The sentence that contains these words is the topic sentence. The other words you wrote are the supporting details for the main idea.
- **Write:** the main idea for each paragraph in your notebook. This will provide you with a written record of the most important ideas you learned. This written record will be helpful if you have to take a test that covers the reading assignment.

Use **REDW** strategy to help you understand the information in your reading assignments.

4. Conclusion

The reading strategies explained beforehand are meant to help students engage with the reading materials more effectively and maximise understanding. Mastery of such strategies requires constant practice and rehearsal. Therefore, students need to go through these strategies and try them when they deal with different types of texts, starting from the purpose of reading set the by the task they are engaged in.

Avoiding Procrastination

Outline :

1. Introduction
 2. Definition
 3. Characteristics of procrastinators
 4. When you procrastinate (patterns)
 5. Reasons of procrastination
 6. Causes of procrastination
 7. Strategies to combat procrastination
-
-

1. Introduction

We all procrastinate at some time or another, and researchers suggest that the problem can be particularly pronounced among students. An estimated 25 to 75 percent of college students procrastinate on academic work.

2. Definition

Procrastination is a learned (acquired) behavior that involves putting off or postponing something until a later time. As procrastination is an acquired (learned) behavior, it can be unlearned, reduced or eliminated.

3. Characteristics of procrastinators

- a. They accept and even boast about their being procrastination
- b. They pride themselves on being able to do things quickly, at the last minute, and under pressure
- c. They often wait for a “push”, a threat of a specific consequence, crisis, outside force to start doing things.
- d. They focus on completing the task on time and not its quality.
- e. They try to use their procrastination as a legitimate excuse for not performing on high levels or not completing projects

4. When you procrastinate

To discover your procrastination patterns, answer these questions.

- a. Are there any specific tasks involved when you procrastinate?

- b. Do you procrastinate at the beginning of a task, or during the middle of it?
- c. Do you start multiple tasks, jumping from one to another, and make less important tasks appear more important and urgent?

5. Why you procrastinate (reasons)

- a. Lack of interest, motivation or purpose
- b. Low self-confidence
- c. Overestimating how much time left to perform tasks
- d. Underestimating how long certain activities will take to complete
- e. Too difficult or complex task
- f. Lack of skills or know-how
- g. Overextended or over committed
- h. Unconducive environment
- i. Forgetting
- j. Blaming sickness or poor health
- k. Not feeling in the mood to do the task
- l. Not caring if a task gets done or not (negligence/carelessness)

6. Causes of procrastination

- a. False beliefs (work better under pressure)
- b. Fear of failure
- c. Perfectionism
- d. Self-control (do many other side tasks)
- e. Under expectations (from boss, for example, that everything is high priority, to, where to start)
- f. Task related anxieties: certain situations may cause anxiety, which leads to procrastination (visiting a dentist)

7. Strategies to combat procrastination

- a. recognize the onset of procrastination: explore when and why you procrastinate about a specific task. Pay attention to when thoughts of procrastination start to creep into your mind.
- b. identify a purpose and a meaning: avoid negative attitudes toward a task, as they lower motivation. Find a valid purpose for the task.
- c. create an interest: through finding other people working with you on the task, looking for information in alternative sources. This increases interest.
- d. take charge of the situation: gather up all necessary material, and select an appropriate environment.
- e. prioritize and stick the order: prepare a list of tasks that must be done according to order of importance, and schedule time.
- f. relax your personal standards: avoid perfectionism and be realistic with your expectations. You don't have to be the best all the time.
- g. be flexible and willing to change: be ready to change the way you used to do things. Try new strategies and create new behavior patterns
- h. face your fear and failure: focus on your positive traits, accomplishments, skills. Talk to yourself positively, and build your self-confidence
- j. visualize success: create a mental picture of yourself feeling positive about your work, and completing the work on time.

- k. make a contract with yourself: stop using excuses for not completing tasks, create a plan of action with clear goals.
- l. reward yourself: once you have completed a task (or even a small portion of a larger task), it is important to reward yourself for your efforts something that you find fun and enjoyable.
- m. eliminate distractions: turn off all distractions – such as music, television, and social networking sites – and use that time to focus all of your attention on the task at hand.
- n. break down projects: when you are faced with a big project, take individual items on your list and break them down into a series of steps into more manageable segments.
- o. be kind to yourself: if you have the tendency to label yourself a procrastinator, make your first effort one to drop the name calling. Refocus on doing 5% more toward your goal.
- p. take the smallest step possible: when you don't feel motivated, take the smallest step possible toward your goal. Then, you're more likely to continue taking more steps toward that goal.

8. Conclusion

Procrastination is a bad habit that students should avoid to maintain interest in study and ensure success. Before engaging in combating procrastination, one should first determine the causes that led to it so that it is effectively eliminated or reduced. It may take some time to overcome such an issue, but through constant engagement and systematic procedures, procrastinators can modify such a bad behaviour and adopt more appropriate ones.

Time for practice

Task: Follow the instructions below to demonstrate how you can fight procrastination.

1. On separate paper, create a chart such as the one shown below. Add eighteen rows on your chart.
2. In the first column, list the eighteen reasons people often procrastinate .
3. In the second column, tick the reasons you use to procrastinate.
4. In the third column, list specific strategies for combating the reason for procrastination.
5. In the last column, explain how you would apply the strategy.

| List of reasons | Your reasons | Strategies | Application |
|-----------------|--------------|------------|-------------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

