

TECHNIQUES AND APPROACHES IN TEACHING  
READING SKILLS TO ADVANCED STUDENTS

by

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## A B S T R A C T

Teaching a foreign language has been thought of as developing particular skills, such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The reading skill in language teaching has gained more importance since the 1970's.

After the 1970's the general aim is to teach a foreign language to be used for communication. Taking this into consideration, the major goal of a reading program for advanced students can be defined as to teach them to read unknown authentic texts with adequate comprehension. This thesis attempts to present basic reading skills that have to be mastered to comprehend the text adequately. It discusses techniques and approaches in teaching reading, at three phases; pre-reading, while-reading, post-reading. It attempts to point out areas in which improvements for reading comprehension should be made.

Chapter I gives general information about various methods and approaches that have dominated foreign language

teaching since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Emphasis is put on the teaching of reading in the discussion of these methods.

Text which constitutes the core of a reading program should be selected with great care. As will be discussed in Chapter II, criteria such as linguistic level and content of the material, needs and interests of the students, objectives of the program must be considered in text selection.

The foreign language learner reads in different ways depending on the purpose and the type of the text. Basic reading skills, such as skimming, scanning, and comprehending, and other subskills that have to be mastered are discussed with illustrative examples in Chapter II.

Various techniques and approaches in teaching reading, focusing on vocabulary, structure, and meaning, at pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading phases are discussed in Chapter III. These points are later illustrated in a sample text.

Improvements in reading comprehension are grouped into two: improvements related to the students and improvements related to the instructor of the program. During this discussion, suggestions are made for more efficient teaching of reading.

## Ö Z E T

Yabancı dil öğretimi dinleme, konuşma, okuma ve yazma gibi belirli becerilerin geliştirilmesi olarak düşünülür. Okuma becerisi ise özellikle 1970'lerden sonra önem kazanmaya başlamıştır.

1970'lerden sonra yabancı dil öğretiminde iletişim temel amaç olarak saptanmıştır. Bu yöntemde, ileri düzeydeki öğrenciler için hazırlanmış okuma programının amacı öğrencilerin daha önce karşılaşmadıkları özgün metinleri okuduklarında yeterli derecede anlamalarını sağlamak olarak saptanmıştır. Bu çalışmada bu tip metinleri anlayabilmek için gerekli olan temel okuma becerileri sunularak okuma öğretimindeki yöntemler ve yaklaşımlar okuma öncesi, okuma sırası ve okuma sonrası olmak üzere üç bölümde tartışılır. Daha etkili okuma öğretimi için ne gibi gelişmelerin yapılabileceği çeşitli etkinlikler önerilerek tartışılır.

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## I N T R O D U C T I O N

Teaching a foreign language has been thought of as developing several skills in the foreign language learner: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In some methods, one skill is more emphasized than the others. However, learning a foreign language requires the mastering of all four skills.

Reading as a skill has gained more importance since the 1970's. It is considered an essential component of foreign language teaching programs. Most foreign language learners do not have the opportunity of talking to a native speaker while learning the language. They are acquainted with the language only by reading materials that are written in that particular foreign language. They read magazines, literary books, and specific articles either to obtain information for their studies or only for pleasure.

One of the main characteristics of reading is that it is an individual activity, though it requires guidance to develop basic reading skills. Reaching a certain level of skill in reading, the foreign language learner can go on with his reading by himself with no guidance. He can, most of the time, choose the material he wants to read and control the rate of reading according to his own reading purposes. Furthermore, he can maintain his knowledge of the foreign language by reading. However, reading should not be seen as something separate from the other skills. According to Widdowson (173), "it's taken as the realization of a general

interpretive process which underlies all communicative activity."

The major goal of a reading program for advanced students is to lead them to become independent, efficient readers, that is, the learners have to read unknown authentic texts independently with adequate comprehension. In order to fulfill this aim, basic reading skills have to be introduced to the students through the program. Thus this thesis attempts to point out basic reading skills that must be mastered in order to get full comprehension from unfamiliar authentic texts. It discusses techniques and approaches in teaching reading to advanced students. In addition, improvements in reading comprehension are mentioned and suggestions made for more efficient teaching of reading.

Chapter I, putting emphasis on the teaching of reading, gives general information about various methods and approaches that have dominated foreign language teaching since the 19th century.

Chapter II presents the aim of a reading program for advanced students. The second section of Chapter II discusses criteria, such as linguistic level and content of the material, needs and interests of the learners, and objectives of the program, that need to be considered in text selection. In the last section, providing illustrative examples and exercises, basic reading skills, such as skimming, scanning, and comprehending are discussed. Comprehension is further divided into four subskills: (i) Understanding relations within and among sentences through lexical cohesion devices, (ii) deducing the meaning of unknown lexical items, (iii) distinguishing

between the main idea and the supporting arguments, and (iv) reading critically. These subskills and other strategies that have to be developed for adequate comprehension of the text are presented with examples.

Chapter III is devoted to techniques and approaches in teaching reading in an English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom, focusing on vocabulary, structure, and meaning at three phases: pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading. The discussion of various activities are illustrated in a sample text.

Chapter IV discusses the improvement in reading comprehension. Major improvements related to the students and the instructor of the program are presented with various activities. Suggestions are made for more efficient teaching of reading.

## I. GENERAL INFORMATION

### A. Methods and Approaches in Teaching a Foreign Language

#### 1. Upto Late 1970's

Two views have been dominant in foreign language teaching since the 19th century. Rivers (11) refers to them as formalist and activist. Formalists, who had a deductive approach in language teaching, emphasized the learning of forms and their application. On the other hand, activists favored inductive learning, that is, letting the student discover the generalization after he had heard the forms. Formalist teaching was based on artificial exercises which did not reflect real life situations and which limited use of language, whereas activist teaching acquainted the learner first with the language used for every day communication. Formalists emphasized reading and writing and activists put emphasis on oral understanding and speaking as basic to reading and writing.

Methods that have developed from these two views are still used in teaching foreign languages. The instructor of a foreign language teaching program chooses those parts of each method that suit the objectives of the course, the level, and the educational needs of the learners. As Rivers (13) states, the most effective part of each method is "...elaborated and refashioned, so that the best of the past is not lost but serves the purpose of the present."

In the following section, the basic characteristics of the major methods which have dominated foreign language teaching since the 19th century are mentioned with emphasis

on the reading skill.

a. The Grammar-Translation Method.

This method can be traced back to the formal teaching of Latin and Greek which dominated Europe for several centuries. The main objective of this method is to develop an understanding of the grammar of the foreign language. Furthermore, it aims at training the student to write the language accurately through translation of different texts.

Detailed grammatical explanations are given in the mother tongue of the learners. The learners memorize the grammatical rules as units that include illustrative sentences in order to attain the mastery of word and sentence structure. Then they apply the rules they have learned in order to form sentences in the foreign language. In this method, the foreign language learners try to extract meaning from the texts by translating them into the native language. Speech is ignored completely. The students do not use the language in the classroom except in answering questions about the text.

Reading is not emphasized in the Grammar-Translation Method. In a reading lesson, the students one by one read out the passage which they are given as homework. Afterwards, the teacher reads the first part of the text aloud to the students. Then the students are allowed to look over the rest of the text by themselves. However, most of the time the teacher does not follow the procedure through because reading the text aloud is a very time-consuming activity. A few comprehension questions about the reading selection are asked by the instructor. A little reading aloud at the begin-

ning of the lesson is done, a few words and phrases are discussed, and a few comprehension questions are asked the students during the reading lesson.

There are three major weaknesses in the Grammar-Translation Method: (i) memorization of grammatical rules, (ii) use of the native language, (iii) lack of emphasis on reading and speaking.

(i) One of the main deficiencies is that though this method aims at developing an understanding of the grammar of the target language, it cannot fully achieve this objective. It bases language learning on the memorization of grammatical rules. However, through memorization a long-term knowledge of the language cannot be acquired. Since no emphasis is put on communication skills, the student does not have an opportunity to use the rules he has acquired. In most cases, he cannot express himself freely. Furthermore, due to inadequate knowledge of the structure of the foreign language, he can produce ungrammatical sentences.

(ii) Another point that should be criticized in this method is that giving explanations in the first language inhibits the students in learning the foreign language. Due to the interference of the native language, the students cannot develop the ability to think in the target language. Also, using translation to extract meaning out of the text is not a satisfactory way of learning the language.

(iii) The lack of emphasis on reading and speaking is another weak point that should be considered with regard to this method. Emphasis should be placed on all of the four skills in order for students to master a foreign language.

The students should be prepared for all communication situations.

b. The Direct Method.

This method was the first reaction against the Grammar-Translation Method in the second half of the 19th century. It did not accept the view that language could be learned by memorizing certain grammatical rules and by translation. As opposed to the Grammar-Translation Method which emphasized the skills of listening and writing, the Direct Method emphasized listening and speaking. One of the main objectives of this method is to develop the ability to think in the target language. In this method, chunks of language are taught in the target language without using the native language. By the Direct Method, learning takes place by associating words and phrases with objects and actions without using the first language.

With the emphasis on pronunciation, the sound system of the foreign language is presented to the learners during the first several months of the teaching program. Grammar, which is not taught explicitly and deductively as in the Grammar-Translation Method, is learned through practice. Everyday vocabulary which is taught through visual presentations, illustrations, objects, actions and structures is used in real life situations created in the classroom. Extensive listening and imitation take place until the forms become automatic.

In a reading lesson, the teacher prepares the students for the reading passage by a preceding oral presentation of

new vocabulary and new situations. First the students read the text aloud after the teacher and then they read it individually. Though in some cases difficult vocabulary and structures are explained in the foreign language by the instructor, most of the time the students try to get the meaning of unfamiliar items from the context. The students are not asked to translate passages into their native language. Some comprehension questions are asked about the reading passage in the target language and replied to by the students again in the foreign language. Later, discussion is held among the learners about the reading passage.

There are two weak points in this method that need to be discussed: (i) insufficient opportunity of using the language, (ii) lack of emphasis on the skills of reading and writing.

(i) Though this method achieves what it intends to do -to teach the target language using only that language- it is not completely successful. By creating real life situations in the classroom, the learners become familiar with the foreign language. However, they do not have the opportunity of using the language in these situations. Being unable to go beyond the limits of these specially designed contexts, the students cannot communicate freely outside the classroom. Yet it achieves its aim in teaching the foreign language using that language as the teaching medium.

(ii) Another deficiency of this method is its emphasis on the skills of listening and speaking and its neglect of reading and writing which are also important skills in learning a foreign language. Priority should not be given only to

particular skills as in this method.

c. The Reading Method.

In the late 1920's, it was realized that no one could learn to understand or speak a foreign language in the limited time given to language study in schools (Finocchiaro, 4). So the course designers started to put more emphasis on reading and speaking, that were not really emphasized in the previous language teaching methods. Consequently, a new method was devised to incorporate these into classroom procedures.

As it is obvious from its name, in the Reading Method, the emphasis is on the reading skill. As discussed earlier, reading is not overtly emphasized in the Grammar-Translation Method and in the Direct Method. During the initial period of language learning, the sound system of the language is presented to the students in the Reading Method. Hearing simple phrases, they try to speak in simple sentences at this phase. Rivers (22) points out that in the Reading Method the course has two components: intensive reading and extensive reading.

In intensive reading, which takes place in the classroom, original or simplified stories are used as reading passages. The text is divided into short sections which are preceded by a list of words to be taught through context, translation or pictures. Furthermore, the students are trained in reading complete sentences for adequate comprehension. Most of the time, pictures and drawings are used to set the scene at the beginning of the lesson by the teacher. The first section is read aloud in the foreign language by the instructor. Then the students are asked to answer a few ques-

tions in the native language and later to reread the text silently. Afterwards, more comprehension questions are posited by the instructor. Though the meanings of unknown words are given in the foreign language when it is necessary by the teacher, most of the time the students are required to deduce the meaning through context. While reading the story the students either work on their own or in pairs. Grammar structures found in the reading passages are presented and as a post reading activity, true/false tests are given to the students.

In extensive reading, the students read various texts that are suitable for their levels. They acquire a large vocabulary and enlarge their background information about the foreign language.

One point that needs to be criticized about the Reading Method is that putting emphasis only on one skill is not sufficient for learning a foreign language. The students might develop their reading skills, but they cannot speak fluently or write accurately. So it can be said that this method cannot achieve its general aim, that is, to teach the foreign language. Having insufficient knowledge about the structure of the target language leads the students to misunderstanding the text.

#### d. The Audio-Lingual Method.

This method has emerged after the 1920's and 1930's as a reaction against the traditional Grammar-Translation Method which was almost entirely devoted to translating and learning rules of grammar. The work of the American structural linguist Bloomfield, cultural anthropologist Sapir, and

psychologist Skinner have all contributed to the development of the Audio-Lingual Method. This method is associated with structural syllabi which are based on the behavioristic view of language acquisition as habit formation. These habits must be reinforced by the teacher by means of controlled repetition.

The major objective of the Audio-Lingual Method is the development of mastery in four skills, beginning with listening and speaking and then using these for the teaching of reading and writing.

In the initial period of language learning, the emphasis is on the language as it is used in everyday life. However, at more advanced levels, attention moves to the more literary forms of expression as the skills of reading and writing gain more emphasis.

The Audio-Lingual Method is a descriptive approach to the teaching of a language. The emphasis is on the formal properties of language which have to be learned by the students in order to encode and decode speech.

In the Audio-Lingual Method, a new grammatical structure is first presented in a dialogue which is the context for the new structure. Through drills (pattern practice) the new structure is memorized by the students. Furthermore, the students are asked to produce new sentences with the same structure by using different vocabulary items. Thus through mimicry and memorization the learner forms habits. The idea is also to practice certain patterns with near perfect pronunciation.

Emphasis is put on reading only at an advanced level

in the Audio-Lingual Method. At this stage, authentic reading passages that are appropriate to the level of the students are chosen to be read in the target language. These passages are later discussed in the classroom. The learners can be asked to write a composition about the reading passage in order to express themselves freely. At more advanced levels, the learners can be required to read literary texts on different topics outside the classroom. Emphasis is not put particularly on the skill of reading in this method. The students are expected to develop this skill while giving priority to the skills of listening and speaking.

Three main drawbacks of this method are these:

(i) monotony, (ii) habit formation, (iii) lack of emphasis on reading and writing.

(i) One of the essential deficiencies of this method is its tendency to be monotonous. Practicing drills one after another bores both the teacher and the students. The exercises become very dull when there is no variation in the forms and when the instructor does not use visual aids.

(ii) Though memorization and pattern drill exercises are considered beneficial at the very beginning of the language learning program, at more advanced levels, they are not satisfactory. Communication skills cannot be developed solely by forming habits. It can be said that this method lacks the creative use of language.

(iii) Another weakness of this method is its emphasis on listening and speaking and its deemphasis of the skills of reading and writing. In order for students to master a foreign language, emphasis should be placed on all of the four

skills.

e. Cognitive Code Learning Approach.

Chomsky (Finocchiaro, 4) says "... it seems to me impossible to accept the view that linguistic behaviour is a matter of habit, that is slowly acquired by reinforcement, association, and generalization." Chomsky rejects the behavioristic view of language learning and the habit formation theory of the Audio-Lingual Method. According to Chomsky, forming habits and then forming new sentences by analogy is not sufficient for language learning. Language cannot be learned only by imitation and repetition. Chomsky himself denies the fact that transformational theory has had impact on language teaching. Challenging the behavioristic theories of language acquisition, he claims that language learning is a creative process - a rational, cognitive activity - rather than a conditioning process.

The Audio-Lingual Method aimed at keeping the learners active through continuous repetition of drills. Those who favored the Cognitive Code Learning Approach question this active use of the language. According to this view, repeating forms mechanically is not an active but a passive activity. It does not keep the students active during the lesson. Instead of forming habits, the learners have to be allowed to practice thinking in the target language.

In the Cognitive Code Learning Approach, language behavior is rule governed behavior. Students should receive some deductive explanations about the formulation of rules. If they do not have adequate knowledge of the language, they

will have problems in producing new sentences within the limits of analogy. However, understanding the interrelationship among the systems of the language helps the learners in constructing new and acceptable sentences. Therefore, in the Cognitive Code Learning Approach, there is a close analysis of the language system and a great deal of practice in producing new sentences according to its rules.

In a reading lesson, mental powers of the language learners are used more effectively in this method. The reading passage is usually read by the students in the classroom. Then deductive explanations about the new structures in the text are given by the teacher. After discussing several comprehension questions relevant to the reading text, the students develop their use of ability to think in the target language through exercises. These exercises lead them towards using the language efficiently. For example, instead of structure drills, transformational exercises are used to practice a new structure. The students are asked to rewrite a sentence, for example, with "if...then" structure in another way.

This approach seems to be the most flexible and efficient of the reviewed methods in the sense that it leads the students towards using the language effectively. At least there is a trend towards the development of techniques which require a more active use of the learners' mental powers.

f. Eclectic Approach.

Eclectic Approach is a modified method combining the best features of several methods and techniques. In this approach, all four skills are equally balanced from the initial

to the most advanced levels. This approach is modified according to the objectives of the course, the level, and the educational needs of the students. For example, at the beginning of the course, the teacher can use pattern drills in order to practice certain structures. However, these drills, which make the class very monotonous after some time, should not be used at an advanced level. On the other hand, the teacher who favors this approach can make use of the Reading Method for developing this particular skill more fully. Furthermore, by using the most effective aspect of the Cognitive Code Learning Approach, the instructor can give a deductive explanation of the rules of the foreign language. In this way, the most efficient aspect of each method and approach is adapted to the classroom.

The Grammar-Translation Method, the Direct Method, the Reading Method, the Audio-Lingual Method, the Cognitive Code Learning Approach, and the Eclectic Method can all be referred to as the traditional approaches (Roberts, 95). Among these, the Audio-Lingual Method which puts emphasis on listening and speaking as basic to reading and writing belongs to activist teaching. The Cognitive Code Learning Approach in which learning of forms and their application is emphasized through deductive teaching is a formalist approach.

In a structure-based course the target language is broken into separate grammatical structures which are presented to the learners in a linear organization. The structural elements are graded according to certain criteria, such as simplicity, regularity, productivity, frequency of occurrence,

and learner's immediate needs. A new structural element is presented in each unit of this structure-based course. The learner is expected to recognize each structural element in order to use the target language. Synthesizing chunks of language, he is expected to develop his competence of the language. However, a mechanical analysis of the grammatical structure and vocabulary of the target language does not lead to functional competence in the language. The foreign language learner cannot develop mastery of the language with this system of language learning.

## 2. After 1970's

During the 1970's it was recognized that methods in use upto that time did not fulfill the needs of foreign language learners and did not teach the target language as well as was hoped. Thus the Communicative Approach emerged as a reaction to early methods. It was a reaction against all methods which did not serve the aim of developing the communicative aspect of language, that is, the ability to use the language. The Communicative Approach which is based on specific student needs emphasizes instruction of the language as a social tool.

Wilkins played a great role in the development of the Communicative Approach. According to Wilkins (Roberts, 98), foreign language learners must learn "how to mean" in the target language.

The Communicative Approach does not deny the importance of mastering the grammatical system of the language, nor does it abandon a systematic development of structural mastery in

the presentation of materials. However, a concern with the communicative purpose of language revives interest in discourse analysis and semantics. Emphasis on semantics offers the foreign language learners various behavioral, linguistic, and paralinguistic features, such as sounds and gestures, in expressing an idea. Humanistic psychology revives motivation and personal factors in language learning. As Finocchiaro (5) says, "The communicative approach integrates communication theory, attention to grammar, to semantic, to situation, to humanistic psychology."

The Communicative Approach provides the learner with grammatical knowledge, fluency, and effective communication strategies in order to prepare him more efficiently to meet the demands of real communication. In this approach, the emphasis is on meaning and use of language. This characteristic distinguishes it from structure-based methods which are concerned more with form than with function. Function is considered first and the structures which fulfill the function second. As Dobson (3) states, an interest is revived in using materials with communicative units. The aim of these communicative units is to provide the learner with linguistic competence as well as with communicative competence.

The primary goal of a structural syllabus is to build language competence through usage which is the acquisition of linguistic rules. On the other hand, the primary goal of a functional (notional) syllabus is to build language competence through use, that is, the ability to use the knowledge of these linguistic rules for effective communication (Widdowson, 247-250).

As Widdowson claims (248), the traditional approach which is based on structural syllabi fails to teach communication directly. It prevents real participation; therefore, it is more difficult to acquire communicative abilities. In order to learn to communicate in real life situations, the learner should be exposed to real life language rather than to artificial phraseology. The functional syllabi are used for the teaching of everyday, real life language in sociocultural situations in which items of phonology, lexicon, grammar, and culture are selected and graded to serve the learner's communicative purpose.

The lessons are not based on teacher presentations. All communicative teaching is learner-centered in that functions and notions are selected and sequenced according to the needs, interests, and abilities of the learners. The teacher urges the students to communicate their own ideas. Each lesson is focused on a particular communicative function in which the exercises entail a genuine communicative act.

Grammar is taught in a communicatively organized course. Grammatical form, which is taught as a means of carrying out communicative intent, is practiced for its value in developing the learner's ability to handle functions in the foreign language. The most important thing is to develop in the learner the competence to perform in real life and to supply the learner not only with grammatical knowledge but with fluency and effective communication strategies.

The skill of reading, like all other language skills, is emphasized in the Communicative Approach. The text being the most effective medium in language learning, the writer con-

veys his message directly to the learner. In this method, the students are trained to be independent, efficient readers.

## B. Reading

### 1. What is Reading?

A student can read aloud a piece of material and pronounce the sounds which are represented by the printed marks. Though he can decode the written script, he may not understand even a word of it. He can conclude the reading of the material without extracting any meaning from the text. Thus decoding is only one aspect of reading. In this respect, reading is a process of decoding a particular writing system into speech, that is, the transference from the written to the oral form.<sup>1</sup>

Printed or written symbols are used as cues to construct a representation of a spoken message in the written text. However, reading is not just a linguistic exercise but it is the getting of meaning out of a text for a certain purpose. In this process, there is a transfer of meaning from mind to mind - a transfer of message from the writer to the reader. As Widdowson (174) states, reading is regarded as the interaction between the writer and the reader mediated through the text.

Reading involves guessing, checking, asking oneself questions; therefore, it is considered an active process, not a receptive and passive process, in which the reader tries to make sense of the written message. The reader draws on his

interpretive skills to reconstruct the writer's presuppositions and appropriate implications. According to Rivers (216), foreign language learners should be able to get three levels of meaning out of the text: (i) Lexical meaning which is the semantic content of words and expressions, (ii) structural and grammatical meaning which can be derived from the inter-relationships among words, or parts of words, or the word order, (iii) sociocultural meaning which is the evaluation that people belonging to that culture attach to the words they are reading.

Since reading is a uniquely individual process, people read whenever they can—some in their native language and others in a foreign language. One advantage of reading is that the reader can select the reading material himself and control the content and the rate of presentation of the material. Through reading various materials on different topics, the reader can learn new vocabulary and ideas and combine this new information with what he knew before.

## 2. What do Foreign Language Learners Read?

The materials that a foreign language learner reads are not completely different from what a person reads in his mother tongue. However, the difference is at the level of these reading selections. For example, a foreign language learner cannot read a newspaper article during the first few weeks of his learning program. After a few months, he can start reading authentic texts that are appropriate to his language level.

As Greenwood (81) claims, reading is a silent and individual activity. Most texts are read silently because reading is naturally a silent activity. However, there are some written texts that are written in order to be read aloud and listened to, such as news on the television and the radio.

The foreign language learner very seldom faces a full length text or a paragraph with a complex sentence in real life. He may face isolated sentences or unconnected words, such as a sign or a notice on the bulletin board. He may come across a situation where he has to fill a form for a special purpose, such as for registration. In another case, he may read a timetable in order to learn the arrival of a train.

Reading materials can be grouped according to their genres:

- Novels, short stories, essays, plays, poems, reports, reviews, textbooks
- Newspapers, magazines
- Manuals, guides
- Application forms, contracts
- Recipes, instructions, menus, regulations, signs
- Graphs, timetables, street maps, diagrams
- Letters, telegrams, postcards
- Price lists, telephone directories

### 3. Why do Foreign Language Learners Read?

Efficient reading is based on having a purpose for reading. The foreign language learner should know why he is reading that particular material.

Some foreign language learners read either for specif-

ic information, such as looking up someone's number in the telephone directory, or for significant information in a specific field, such as reading an article on Shakespeare's women characters.

One may read poems for enjoyment. On the other hand, some material are read only for study purposes, such as the majority of high school students read history articles and textbooks only for this specific purpose. There are some people who read only for social communication.

As all readers of a language do, foreign language learners read because they want to get something from the reading material-facts, ideas, feelings, mainly the message the writer has expressed. Through reading, foreign language learners develop themselves by adding the newly acquired feelings and ideas to their other experience.

#### 4. How do Foreign Language Learners Read?

Reading depends on the purpose and the type of text desired by the instructor and the student. A distinction among foreign language learners can be made according to their reading purpose: those who read for literary purposes and those who read for enjoyment.

The purpose of the foreign language speaker reading a newspaper while waiting for a bus, whose eyes only pass over the printed text, is totally different from the purpose of another foreign language speaker who reads a serious report in his office that will be discussed in an international meeting. The approach of one foreign language speaker to reading material is completely different from any other.

The foreign language speaker who reads a newspaper cares only for the information he is particularly interested in. Though he misses a word or a phrase while looking over the newspaper very quickly, he can get the general idea of the printed material. On the other hand, the foreign language speaker who reads a serious report needs to concentrate on the material more fully. He must pay attention to each detail of the report. In this respect, familiar materials like newspapers and professional articles are read at normal rate whereas unfamiliar materials like a legal document have to be read more slowly.

To this point, what reading is, what foreign language learners read, why and how foreign language learners read have been surveyed. These topics, especially how foreign language learners read, are discussed in detail in the following chapters.

In the following chapter, the aims of a reading program, several criteria that need to be considered for text selection, and basic reading skills with illustrative examples are discussed.

## FOOTNOTE

<sup>1</sup>In this case, reading aloud and silent reading are both considered oral forms.

## II. READING IN AN EFL CLASSROOM

### A. Aims of a Reading Program for Advanced Students

Upto the 1970's the general tendency in a reading program was to decode the particular printed material and to comprehend the message the author tried to convey. There was no emphasis on training the learners to be effective independent readers. However, after the 1970's emphasis has been put on teaching the students how to deal with unfamiliar texts on their own in order to achieve full comprehension.

Nuttall (21) claims that the general aim of a reading program is "to enable students to read without help unfamiliar authentic texts, at appropriate speed, silently, and with adequate understanding." He proposes the following three points in designing a reading program for advanced students:

- (i) Reading without guidance, (ii) authenticity of texts,
- (iii) reading at appropriate speed and silently.

(i) Reading without guidance: This is reading a particular material independently without receiving much help from the instructor. At lower levels of foreign language learning, the students work on particular texts with the help of their teacher. However, outside the school, the students have to continue reading different articles by themselves, that is, they might not have guidance all the time. Therefore, the students have to be led towards reading with little help or even with no guidance. The major goal at an advanced level of foreign language teaching is to train the learner in special ways, so that he can handle unknown original texts himself

and understand the text to suit his reading purpose.

(ii) Authenticity of texts: At an advanced level of a reading program, authentic texts which are structurally and lexically suitable to the levels of the students have to be presented. Authentic texts are favored rather than simplified texts because through simplification difficult words and new structures are removed and the message that is conveyed by the author is rewritten in more explicit terms. On the other hand, original presentation of the ideas is retained in authentic texts. If a student at an advanced level cannot handle an authentic text which is appropriate to his level, he cannot deal with unfamiliar original texts outside the reading program. The authenticity of texts is discussed in detail in the following section of this chapter.

(iii) Reading at an appropriate speed and silently: Reading, basically, is a silent activity. Though at lower levels of a reading program the students can read aloud to practice pronunciation, at an advanced level, the learners have to read silently at appropriate speed in order to achieve full comprehension. The most important disadvantage of reading aloud is that it slows down the reading activity and, therefore, breaks down concentration of the students. Consequently, the readers are easily drawn away from the text. Reading slowly at a faster rate has the same disadvantage as reading aloud. Reading at inappropriate speed and aloud prevents the students from comprehending the content adequately.

The following three general strands of the reading program have been recognized by Harris and Sipay (28).

(a) Developmental reading: This is the elementary stage in reading. The main goal is to develop and improve reading skills, that is, learning to recognize the written symbols. In this kind of reading, the students develop the skill of word recognition, such as decoding.

(b) Functional reading: Functional reading which deals with reading to learn is considered an advanced level in foreign language reading. At this phase, the learner develops his skill of extracting meaning from the text. This requires identifying the main idea from supporting arguments, drawing inferences from the text, and evaluating content as a whole. This thesis is focused only on functional reading.

(c) Recreational reading: This can be considered the development of interest in reading as a pleasure getting activity.

At an advanced level, it is assumed that the students have mastered the skill of decoding during their previous instruction. Therefore, in a reading program for advanced students, the learners have to concentrate more on functional reading, that is, they have to develop basic reading skills especially those directly related to comprehension. Recreational reading can take place as an outside activity in an advanced reading program. This thesis does not concern recreational reading.

The aim of a reading program for advanced students is described as developing basic reading skills that will help the learners read authentic texts themselves with full or adequate comprehension.

## B. Text Selection

One of the most important areas that have received special consideration in a reading program has been text selection. Foreign language learners develop their skills of reading by using texts which have a great effect on the learning opportunities of the students. Since text is the only medium through which the writer conveys his message to the reader, the learners can be expected to expand their knowledge of the language through reading materials.

Since text selection requires great care for each reading program at different levels, good material for an advanced level is that which is considered appropriate to the language level, needs and interests of the learners, and objectives of the program. Therefore, it has commonly been agreed that the instructor should consider criteria in text selection. These criteria can be grouped as follows:

1. Linguistic level
  - a. Level of the vocabulary
  - b. Level of the grammar
2. Content
  - a. Suitability of content, needs and interests of the learners
  - b. Simplified vs. Authentic texts
  - c. Exploitability
3. Objectives of the reading program
  - a. Time restrictions
  - b. Cost

## 1. Linguistic Level

### a. Level of the Vocabulary.

The basic assumption is that the vocabulary level of the passages must be appropriate to the advanced level of the students. Yet the fact that a foreign language learner should always acquire new vocabulary has to be kept in mind. However, the amount of new vocabulary that should be introduced in the text is one of the main questions that has been raised with regard to this phase. According to one view (Bright and McGregor, 80), there should be no new words in the text for intensive reading. This approach holds that new vocabulary should be introduced in other texts that are used for extensive reading. It can be said that an extreme case is represented by this view. As will be discussed in Chapter III, there can be new words which are at different levels of difficulty in the text, so that some of these preliminary new lexical items can be introduced before reading. On the other hand, the students can also be encouraged to understand the meaning of some of the unknown words from the context during the reading activity. Furthermore, after a certain period of time at an advanced level, texts with particular lexical difficulty can be introduced to the students to get them involved in linguistically complex reading materials.

### b. Level of the Grammar.

Besides the vocabulary level, the grammatical level of the text should suit the learner's linguistic competence. At an advanced level, it is assumed that the students have mastered most of the grammatical structures. However, there might

be some problems in dealing with passages with complex sentence structures. This structural difficulty is a hindrance in the adequate comprehension of the text. If the grammatical level of the text is appropriate to the learner's knowledge of the grammar of the foreign language, then the students will have a better comprehension of the reading material. Therefore, structural difficulty has to be avoided to some extent.

The style of the writer is another aspect of the reading passage that has to be kept in mind in text selection by the instructor. As Bright and McGregor point out (59), an old-fashioned style or strongly emphasized local dialect will be great trouble for the students in comprehending the text.

These points relevant to the linguistic level are illustrated with examples in Chapter III.

## 2. Content

### a. Suitability of Content and Needs and Interests of the Learners.

Content of the reading material has been generally considered as one of the criteria in text selection. One of the topics for argument with regard to text selection is whether the material must be completely familiar to the students or whether it can be unfamiliar to some extent.

With regard to suitability of content, it has been generally accepted that the materials should not be too heavily culture laden. Our personal experience indicates that when faced with culturally unfamiliar passages, one finds it difficult to synthesize meaning. This reduces motivation to read them. For example, for Turkish students at an advanced

level, except for those who are interested in anthropology, a reading passage about Amerindians' everyday life might be a weak selection. In such a passage, there can be expressions and traditional concepts that are completely unfamiliar to the Turkish students. Even though the advanced students can get a general idea about the passage, depending on their linguistic competence, they might miss several items that will prevent them from fully comprehending the passage. It is likely that the students will not enjoy it as much as someone else who has some background knowledge of Amerindians.

However, another argument is raised with regard to text selection at this phase, that is, whether the motivation level of the materials has any effect on overcoming the problem of unfamiliarity of the content. It is often considered that interesting material is better understood than uninteresting material (Joyce, 26). A lively reading material is one that always keeps the interest and the attention of the reader at the highest level and one that moves him along with the text. Furthermore, a foreign language learner reads a passage for a particular reason, such as to find a specific piece of information or to draw inferences from the text. Thus certain things relevant to the reading purpose are expected from the passage. Therefore, as the reader finds answers to his questions, he will be satisfied and drawn into the text. In reference to the previous example, those students who are really interested in anthropology can overcome the problem of unfamiliarity of the text. Though the content is unfamiliar, their interest in this specific field and the motivation of the article would help them find answers to their specific questions

and comprehend the passage better.

Since the students are not allowed to choose the reading passages in most reading programs, it is the responsibility of the instructor to select texts according to the needs and interests of the students. The information required in the process of selection, such as the age, language ability, and educational background of the students can be gathered through questionnaires. In addition to this information, the instructor can also be provided with information about the competence of the learners in the target language. This specific information is either taken from the learners' previous instructors or by making use of cloze tests.

One of the topics for argument is how specific the reading will be, that is, whether it will meet the demands of the whole class or of individuals. There can be performance differences among the advanced students. Some of them might have developed particular reading skills more than others. Yet others have mastered different reading skills. Considering the fact that each learner cannot be at the same level, texts that suit the majority of the learners can be chosen. The major goal will be fulfilled if the reading materials cover the needs of the majority in an intensive reading program.

As opposed to this fact that materials which are appropriate to the majority should be chosen, we believe that the instructor has to prepare materials that can be used for the whole class, for small groups, and for individuals. For example, if one of the essential needs of one group of learners is to improve the skill of prediction, then appropriate texts should be chosen which allow the students to develop this skill.

Materials that are appropriate for the whole class and for small groups can be used during the reading lesson in class. However, texts that are chosen according to individual needs are better assigned as extensive reading due to the commonly held view that teachers should avoid using class time for individual purposes unless absolutely necessary. In addition to arranging materials for the whole class, for groups, and for individuals, the instructor has to balance the amount of material that requires the guidance of the teacher and texts that need little or no help of the teacher in order to fulfill the main objective of the reading program for advanced students -to develop independent, efficient readers.

b. Simplified vs. Authentic Texts.

Another debatable subject is the use of simplified and authentic texts. A text with structural complexity might not suit the aims of the reading program and also the educational needs of the students in a foreign language teaching program. Translation or the explanation given in the first language cannot be a solution to this problem because having the student translate passages prevents the learner from acquiring the target language to some extent.

Nuttall(32) claims that, if the teacher cannot find a suitable original text, simplification can be done according to the level of the students. In the process of simplification, things that will appeal to the intelligence of the learners have to be kept and those that will cause a hindrance in their understanding, such as new vocabulary and complex sentences, can be removed. Yet basic qualities of discourse and

textual quality should be kept as they are in the original version.

Although simplification is an alternative, it has been generally considered that unsimplified genuine material relevant to the learners' level is the best solution to the problem of simplified vs. authentic texts (Grellet, 7). We agree with the generally held view that in a reading program for advanced students using authentic and genuine texts whenever possible is important and helpful for the learners' development in reading skills. For example, a newspaper article on a current event can be introduced in its original form (with its headlines and pictures) to the students at an advanced level. All these non-linguistic clues help the learner in extracting the meaning from the text.

c. Exploitability.

Choosing those materials that can be exploited is considered another criterion in text selection (Nuttal, 30). If the teacher and the students cannot exploit a text, though the majority of the learners may get pleasure in reading it, it means that particular text is not very efficient in teaching reading skills. If the text is exploitable it can facilitate learning. Therefore, in order to develop specific reading skills in an advanced reading program, texts that can be exploitable and that meet the demands of the readers for that specific purpose have to be chosen. For example, in developing the skill of recognizing presuppositions and drawing inferences, the particular text that has been chosen should be open to exploitation in these respects. The advanced reader is

trained to recognize what the author expects him to know or even to share with himself, depending on the features of the text. Achieving this particular purpose -drawing inferences from the text- facilitates learning.

### 3. Objectives of the Reading Program for Advanced Students

Another criterion that has been emphasized in text selection is that the texts being chosen have to suit the objectives of the reading program. First of all, general objectives of the program must be described exactly within the framework of the course. Then objectives of each reading lesson have to be defined separately. For example, if one of the specific aims is to develop the skill of distinguishing fact from opinion, then the instructor has to choose appropriate texts in which the readers can practice this skill.

The general objective of a reading program for advanced students is to develop basic reading skills that will help them in better comprehension. Considering this aim, the instructor has to design the course with relevant materials. We believe that selecting irrelevant texts generally hinders the fulfillment of the major goals in a language teaching program.

#### a. Time Restrictions.

The period of time that the students and the materials are together is another point that is closely related to objectives of a reading program. The instructor must be careful in selecting the right amount of material for the time available. The amount of material has to be such that it can be covered during a class period. Only if faced by unexpected emergen-

cies, such as time runs out, might the teacher consider assigning the remaining part as homework.

In addition to covering the reading text in each lesson, the instructor is also responsible for covering the whole reading program at the end of the school year. In most cases, inadequate time is one of the essential deficiencies in language teaching programs. This problem can be witnessed in most of the high schools in Turkey. Most of the time, the last chapters of the book are studied very quickly or even, in some cases, they are left to be studied in the next school year. So lack of time prohibits the instructor from achieving the best results. However, the competent teacher, keeping in mind the objectives of the reading program, is capable of making the necessary modifications in adapting the course content to the classroom within the limited period of time.

b. Cost.

A more serious problem that is not usually considered in the discussion of text selection is the cost of the reading material. Though it may seem to be a minor point, the financial capacities of the schools and the families, educational objectives of the schools, and the expectations of the community should be kept in mind with regard to text selection. In Turkish system, the schools usually have limited financial capacities. Therefore, they cannot afford the high expenses of textbooks. At an advanced level, the students might be asked to buy several books which have high prices for families. Instead of using several books, the instructor can select one or

two textbooks that he will make the most of. In this way, everything will be more economical for the students.

A question arises with regard to the priority of the criteria considered. We believe that interest has to be considered in the primary position in text selection for the following reason. At lower levels, the students are asked to read what is given by the instructor. At an advanced level, they want to have the freedom of selecting their own reading materials. However, this freedom cannot be given most of the time due to strict programming. Therefore, the students have to be given the chance of expressing their personal interests in different topics. If topics are chosen for them, they will read the materials with great interest trying to find answers to those questions they have in mind. Though they face structurally or lexically complex sentences, they will continue reading with their personal interest and the high motivation level of the material.

On the other hand, when the students face reading passages which are linguistically appropriate to their level but that they are not interested in, they will not be motivated. When this personal interest fails, the students either lose concentration and, therefore, cannot comprehend adequately or they leave the passage unfinished.

Another important point that has to be considered besides interest is the authenticity of the material. Genuine original texts have to be presented that will help the learners in acquiring certain notions about the culture of the target language.

As discussed earlier, interest must be considered primarily in text selection. However, it does not mean that linguistic level and objectives of the program have to be forgotten completely. It means that linguistic level can be considered in the latter position because it is assumed that advanced students have mastered the grammar of the language. In case of two texts, the instructor can select the more interesting material which is linguistically more difficult rather than the uninteresting one that is exactly appropriate to the level of the students. Here, the instructor decides whether the text is interesting or not depending on his knowledge about the general interests of the students. As discussed, we believe that interest overcomes difficulty as in any other field.

### C. Basic Reading Skills

The learner reads in different ways depending on the purpose and the type of the text. If reading is to be considered the macro-skill, several micro-skills go into this process of reading efficiently. Reading a newspaper article may require recognition of presuppositions and drawing inferences out of it. On the other hand, searching for the telephone number of a friend in the telephone directory might require only scanning. Therefore, it is important that the right skill appropriate to the reading purpose should be chosen. The three major skills that have to be acquired by foreign language learners are skimming, scanning, and comprehending. Comprehension is further divided into four subskills: (a) Understanding rela-

tions within and among sentences through lexical cohesion devices, (b) deducing the meaning of unknown lexical items, (c) distinguishing between the main idea and supporting arguments, and (d) reading critically (evaluating content).

It is assumed that advanced students have been introduced to these skills through simpler texts at lower levels. Yet they have to develop these basic reading skills by working on more complicated texts in order to become independent, efficient readers.

In the following section, providing illustrative examples basic reading skills are discussed.

#### 1. Skimming

Skimming, which has been accepted as one of the most effective reading skills, is one way of allowing eyes to travel over a page very quickly and to stop at some points to get an idea of the text. In skimming, the reader should try to get the gist of the text -that is, the author's general aim- and try to follow the way he develops each paragraph (Spache and Berg, 30).

Skimming is based on the technique of previewing which involves using the table of contents, the appendix, the preface, and chapter and paragraph headings in order to discover the required information. It is mostly used to select reading texts according to their difficulty and the purpose of reading, for example, when buying a book.

In an advanced reading program, when the student does not want to read the text completely he has to skim through the material paying attention to certain points in the fol-

following order:

- (i) Read the title and the author's name.
- (ii) Read the first paragraph completely.
- (iii) Read the subheadings of each paragraph.
- (iv) Look over quickly for main ideas, clue words, direction words, italics.
- (v) Read the final paragraph if it is a summary.

While preparing a research paper, an advanced student has to skim through several books in order to select those texts that are appropriate for his research. Through previewing and skimming, the reader quickly decides on what he needs to read and avoids reading irrelevant information.

The following is an example of what a student has to pick out in skimming a text (Fry, 54). The student should read the first paragraph and then the first sentences of each paragraph. He should let his eyes travel over the printed material, looking over it very quickly in order to recognize the signal words. These words are discourse markers, such as "however," "occasionally." Recognition of the signal words helps the reader in extracting the main idea which is usually contained in the opening sentence of each paragraph. If it is necessary, the last paragraph can also be read.

Usually the first paragraph will be read at average speed all the way through. It often contains an introduction or overview of what will be talked about. Sometimes, however, the second paragraph contains the introduction or overview. In the first paragraph the author might be 'warming up' or saying something clever to attract attention. Reading a third paragraph completely might be unnecessary.....

.....  
 the main idea is usually contained in the  
 opening sentence.....  
 topic sentence.....  
 .....

.....  
 Besides the first sentence the  
 reader should get some but not all the de-  
 tail from the rest of the paragraph.....  
 names.....dates.....hence sometimes the  
 main idea is in the middle or at the end of  
 the paragraph.

Some paragraphs merely repeat ideas  
 .....

.....  
 Occasionally the main idea can't be  
 found in the opening sentence. The whole  
 paragraph must then be read.

The ending paragraphs must be read  
 more fully as often they contain a summary.  
 The important thing is to get the author's  
 ideas at a very fast speed.

### Previewing Exercise

DIRECTION: Given Explorations in Applied Linguistics by H.G. Widdowson you want to get an idea about the book. Skim through the text on the back cover, the Table of Contents, and the first few paragraphs of the Introduction. Then answer the following questions.

This book is a selection of papers that I have written over the past eight years for presentation at courses and seminars in various parts of the world. I am prompted to bring them together in one volume because the reactions they have provoked suggest that they touch on issues of interest to many people concerned with applied linguistics and language teaching pedagogy and although most of the papers have appeared in print before they have done so in publications which are not always very easily accessible. So they are presented here in the hope that they will stimulate wider interest and debate.

Obviously I must believe that the papers have some merit and make some contribution to applied linguistic studies: otherwise I would not have had them put into print in the first place: I do not want to try to disarm the reader with the customary coy apology for publishing them.

## Explorations in Applied Linguistics

In recent years there has been growing recognition of Professor Widdowson's major contribution to the study of communicative language teaching. This collection of papers, published together for the first time, shows the development of Widdowson's thinking. The papers, which range from the theoretical discussion to classroom practice, are not intended to be prescriptive, nor do they try to provide conclusive arguments. Rather they invite the reader to explore ideas to consider the practical implications of certain theoretical developments, and to examine his own assumptions more closely.

This volume bridges the gap between the theoretical and practical aspects of communicative language teaching, and Professor Widdowson's clear and original treatment of the subject will appeal to both teachers and applied linguists.

### SECTION ONE Prelude

The teaching of rhetoric to students of science and technology

### SECTION TWO English for Science and Technology

An approach to the teaching of scientific English discourse

EST in theory and practice

The description of scientific language

### SECTION THREE Exercise types

Two types of communication exercise

Gradual approximation

### SECTION FOUR Discourse

Directions in the teaching of discourse

The deep structure of discourse and the use of translation

Approaches to discourse

Rules and procedures in discourse analysis

### SECTION FIVE Procedures of interpretation

Interpretative procedures and the importance of poetry

The authenticity of language data

The process and purpose of reading

### SECTION SIX Simplification

The simplification of use

The significance of simplification

Pidgin and babu

SECTION SEVEN Descriptions and applications  
 Linguistic insights and language teaching principles  
 The partiality and relevance of linguistic descriptions

SECTION EIGHT Reprise  
 Notional syllabuses  
 The communicative approach and its application

1. What is the purpose of the author in writing this book?
2. The book is based on  
 a. theories b. exercises c. both of them
3. Does the book contain a glossary or a bibliography?
4. Would this book most likely appeal to the linguistically trained or the general public?
5. What can you infer from the topics in the Table of Contents?

### Skimming Exercise

DIRECTION: Skim the text "The Light Way" (Spache and Berg, 41-43) in Appendix I. Then answer the following questions without referring to the selection.

1. Which of these is probably not a product of eye strain?  
 a. Visual discomfort b. Organic damage  
 c. Backache d. Headaches
2. For close work, where should the light source be placed?  
 a. Above the work area b. In front of the work area  
 c. Over the shoulder

3. What is the best lighting arrangement for comfortable reading?
  - a. A single light over the shoulder
  - b. A single fluorescent table lamp
  - c. A single high intensity table lamp
  - d. A lighted room and an area light
  
4. What lighting is most appropriate for television viewing?
  - a. Only the TV screen should be lighted
  - b. The room should have a soft, overall lighting
  - c. A small light should be placed on the TV set
  - d. The room should be well-lighted
  
5. How much more light is needed by a sixty-year-old than by a twenty-year-old person?
  - a. Twice as much
  - b. Ten times as much
  - c. Seven times as much
  - d. No more

## 2. Scanning

Scanning is looking very quickly over a text to find an answer to a specific question. It is not reading in the ordinary sense, but allowing the eyes to go over the text to find a specific fact or idea.

An advanced student has done scanning many times at his lower level of instruction. Besides students enrolled in a reading program, everybody does scanning, not being aware of it most of the time, such as while searching for a friend's telephone number in a telephone directory. For example, if the telephone number of Mary C. Winston is needed what one does is just look over the material until one comes to this name. Then the telephone number that is written just near this name is read. The purpose of the activity is to find the telephone number. After this purpose is fulfilled, one does not read

further in the text.

Winster, Joseph Queen Mary Ave. 20	58 35 322
Winston, Mary C. James Sq. 27	44 97 270
Winston, Paul Thompson Point 43	34 06 860
Winstons, Christopher Fleet Str. 30	21 31 490

A preliminary skimming can be done in difficult material in order to find that relevant part of the selection for the reader's own purpose. Scanning is not as thorough an activity as skimming; it is more limited in the sense that specific information is extracted from the text. An illustrative scanning drill is as follows:

#### Scanning through a Text

**DIRECTION:** First read Question I. Then scan the text "Mechanical Vibrations" (Harris and Sipay, 54-55) in order to find the answer. After finding the answer mark the correct answer and then go on with the second question in the same way. DON'T read further on after finding the answer.

1. The frequency of a vibration is described by-
  - a. its pitch
  - b. its loudness
  - c. the number of vibrations per second
  - d. its speed
  
2. Sound waves travel-
  - a. 900,000 feet per minute
  - b. One thousandth of an inch per second
  - c. 186,000 miles per second
  - d. 1,075 feet per second

Your telephone rings. You answer it and the person calling speaks to you. As you converse you are faintly aware of the wind howling around the corner of your house and a street car rumbling past.

Somewhere in the distance a train whistles and in another part of the house a door slams.

Those sounds are vibrations - mechanical vibrations- that set air waves to vibrating against your eardrum, which causes a message to be transmitted to your mind. Each of them has its own number of vibrations per second -that is called frequency.

Sound waves do not travel very far or very fast. Actually they poke along at only 1,075 feet per second and the farther they travel the more faint they become. But when their electrical counterparts travel, as in a telephone circuit, their speed may be increased as much as 900,000 times.

In the above exercise, the student reads the first question. He has this particular item in mind, that is the frequency of a vibration. He goes over the sentences very quickly until he finds the answer at the end of the second paragraph. He does not continue reading but immediately returns to the questions and marks the correct answer which is c -the number of vibrations per second. Then he reads the second question and repeats the same steps.

### Scanning through a List

DIRECTION: Suppose that you have problems in answering the following questions, so you have to consult a dictionary. See Appendix II.

1. What is another word that can be used instead of aerodrome?
2. If you had to divide the word 'affectionate' when writing it, which of the following divisions would be correct?
  - a. af-fect-ion-a-te
  - b. af-fec-tio-nate
  - c. af-fec-tion-ate
  - d. affec-tion-ate

3. Which one is the noun form?
  - a. advice    b. advise
4. Which of these words has different English and American pronunciations?
  - a. affinity    b. aeroplane

### Scanning through a Program

DIRECTION: You want to watch a film on television after seven but before twelve o'clock at night. Looking over the program, find out when this program will be on. See the television program in Appendix III.

### 3. Comprehending

The third basic reading skill is comprehending which involves four subskills according to our categorization:

- a. Understanding Relations within and among Sentences through Lexical Cohesion Devices.

Though it is assumed that advanced students have mastered the structure of the language, there might be cases where they face a structural difficulty. Consequently, they are often discouraged when they cannot get an immediate understanding of the sentence structure in an unfamiliar text. In order to solve this problem, they have to be trained to understand relations within and among sentences through lexical cohesion devices. In dealing with embedded sentences and complex structures, such as relative clauses, the students must be aware of the reference and link words that will help them in getting textual cohesion.

The following four strategies have to be developed in order to understand relations within and among sentences through lexical cohesion devices: (i) Identifying reference and substitution, (ii) interpreting elliptical expressions,

(iii) interpreting lexical cohesion, and (iv) interpreting discourse markers.

(i) Identifying reference and substitution

This involves the identification of the meaning of words, such as it, he, this, then, so, such, etc, which are used both to avoid repetition and to get a meaningful text. They either refer to something previously mentioned or to something that is going to be mentioned. The following drill illustrates how this strategy can be developed.

DIRECTION: In the following passage all the underlined words refer to something mentioned earlier or to something that will be mentioned later in the text. Read the passage (Johnson, 4) and complete the following table.

1

Novae, are old stars which are slowly dying. As they do so, they let out huge clouds of material, sometimes as large as the earth, and these explode into space at a speed of about 8,000,000 kilometres per hour. When this happens, the hotter parts of the star become visible, and this is why novae are so bright. Although the explosions are huge on a human scale, they only consume a small part of the dying star's energy. The death is a slow one, and the star may continue to explode for thousands of years. Indeed, there are even some stars which explode once a fortnight.

	refers to something		what it refers to
	before	after	
1. which	x		<del>Novae</del> old stars
2. they	x		old stars
3. they	x		old stars
4. these	x		Old stars
5. this	x		speed
6. they	x		explosions
7. which	x		Some stars

## (ii) Interpreting elliptical expressions

Ellipsis is omitting certain information that can be understood from the surrounding text (Nuttall, 92). In order to deal with ellipsis, the reader has to find the incomplete information and then try to supply this necessary information from the text. A possible type of exercise is asking the learners to supply the incomplete information in the following paragraph. In order to supply it, the students first have to find what it is. Then using the surrounding information they have to complete the meaning.

DIRECTION: Read the following sentences and supply the incomplete information.

1. The parents said to the boys that they could play snowball but their little sisters should not.
2. The rich man bought a new car but the poor man could not.
3. John was looking for an antique table but he could not find one.

## (iii) Interpreting lexical cohesion

Lexical cohesion is different from other cohesive devices, its role is to help students recognize two different words that have the same referent. One type of lexical cohesion is the use of synonyms to avoid repetition and provide variation in the text. The reader is asked to recognize those words that relate to the same referent. The following example is an exercise in which the students can develop this skill.

DIRECTION: Read the following passage. What is another word used instead of endure having the same meaning.

*accustom*

The campers had spent two days in the desert without water and food. Although they were accustomed to live without water and food for certain period of time, they could not endure the heat of the desert very long. Two more hours of such heat would finish them. So they left the desert at night not bearing it for a second longer.

(iv) Interpreting discourse markers

The students can handle the text more easily, recognizing the fact that a text is not only made up of independent clauses but that there is an interrelationship among the sentences. Discourse markers signal the relationships between different parts of the discourse and imply the functional value of that sentence. By the help of these linking words, the reader can recognize the development of ideas and the arguments in the text.

Discourse markers can be classified into three groups according to their rhetorical value. One group of discourse markers are signals of sequence of events (ex. then, next, at once, etc.); another group is signals of the writer's point of view (ex. similarly, in any case, however, etc), and yet another group is signals of discourse organization (ex. in conclusion, in short, for example, etc).

DIRECTION: Read the following passage (Johnson, 42). What is the rhetorical value of each discourse marker? Replace them by other link-words.

What are the causes that lead to inventions being made? Very often they are quite simply the result of nothing more

than one individual's love of inventing things. Many of the inventions of the Greek inventor, Heron are, for example, just amusing toys. His machine for magically opening temple doors is a case in point. When a fire was lit on the altar this made water in a large hollow container turn to steam and transfer through a tube into a bucket. When the bucket was full it would fall. Because the bucket was attached to the temple doors by a system of ropes, this would make the doors open. This 'amusing toy' was in fact a steam turbine. In cases like this, the proverb that 'necessity is the mother of invention' is just not true.

b. Deducing the Meaning of Unknown Lexical Items.

The traditional way of learning the meaning of an unknown word is to look it up in the dictionary. However, looking up a new word in the dictionary stops a learner from reading and makes him a less effective reader as well. It slows down the reading speed and interrupts his concentration. Furthermore, the reader may not always have a dictionary and guidance. At lower levels, the students might have been introduced to the skill of deducing the meaning of unknown words through contextual clues; however, they might not have mastered it thoroughly. It is assumed that at lower levels, they are allowed to use the dictionary to some extent. Therefore, at an advanced level, instead of consulting a dictionary, the reader should be encouraged to make guesses at the meanings of new words. This fulfills the desired aim at an advanced level—training the learners to be independent, efficient readers.

The following example is an exercise in which the learners can practice the skill of deducing the meaning of the imaginary word mussy. Reading from (i) to (iv), the students find some information about the unknown word.

- (i) The little girl bought a mussy from the store.
- (ii) Later, she divided it into two and gave one piece of it to her friend.
- (iii) Though her friend enjoyed eating it, she could not eat the mussy easily.
- (iv) The little girl removed the cream over the mussy because she only likes the chocolate part.

Though the reader may not understand the meaning in the first sentence, he learns that mussy is something edible in the second sentence. Later he gets information from the context and in the fourth sentence, he can tell that mussy is something which is chocolate with cream on top. This kind of exercise helps the readers understand how the context is used to deduce the meaning of unknown lexical items.

DIRECTION: Read the following passages and try to guess the meaning of the underlined words.

1. The coach said, "Tonight I am going to mention plenty of bad practices in yesterday's game by both coaches and players. I think we all ought to hit the sawdust trail together." (Spache and Berg, 172)
  - a. a path of sawdust    b. a way of repentance
  - c. a church aisle    d. the floor of a sawmill
  
2. Zip was stopped during the war and only after the war did it become popular. What a difference it has made to our lives. It keeps people at home much more. It has made the remote parts of the world more real to us. Photographs show a country but only zip makes us feel that a foreign country is real (Grellet, 32).
  - a. cinema    b. photography    c. television
  - d. telephone

Clues from affixes and roots are provided for deducing meaning of unknown lexical items. In analyzing words, the root, the suffixes and the prefixes have to be distinguished exactly. If the student knows the meaning of the prefix or the suffix, he will be able to guess the meaning of the word. For example, the prefix ante-means preceding in time. When the student faces the word antedate, he can easily understand the meaning - to date earlier than the present.

c. Distinguishing between the Main Idea and the Supporting Arguments.

Finding the main idea of the text has been considered the basic comprehension skill. Extracting the main idea from the text requires careful reading with the purpose of discovering the author's plan. If the reader cannot grasp the author's message, he will miss the whole point in the discussion of several ideas.

The students are trained to comprehend what they read from the initial level of their foreign language learning. However, though they are at advanced level of instruction, some of the students might face comprehension problems having hard times in distinguishing the main idea of the passage. Therefore, the students have to develop the following strategies in order to master this skill: (i) Recognizing the presuppositions underlying the text and making necessary inferences and (ii) anticipation.

(i) In some articles we can easily understand the message the author tried to convey because the purpose of the text is stated explicitly. On the other hand, in some cases, the author's idea is not stated overtly but the reader is

expected to infer some conclusion from what the author has said. In such a case, the author may expect the reader to have some knowledge and experience about that particular subject. Furthermore, as Nuttall (116) claims the author might even expect the reader to share some of his own ideas and feelings. Approaching the text as a whole helps the reader understand its message. Inferring conclusions is based on reasoning from the facts or ideas discussed in the text. An advanced student can use inferential reading to predict outcomes, establish cause and effect relationships, and ascertain the correct sequence of events.

The aim of the following drill is to lead the students to understanding the underlying presuppositions in the text. The reader should get the necessary information that the author expects him to share from the passage and then he draws some inferences out of it.

**DIRECTION:** Read this paragraph (Nuttall, 119) and then answer the following question.

One of the Archaeopteryx specimens was at first wrongly catalogued as a small pterodactyl, because its feathers were very difficult to discern. This shows how even the experts considered it a reptile.

Which of the following are implied by the text?

- a. Archaeopteryx is a reptile
- b. Pterodactyls do not have feathers
- c. Pterodactyls are reptiles
- d. Pterodactyls are large compared with Archaeopteryx

(ii) Predicting the forthcoming information has been considered one of the most important strategies that must be developed with regard to comprehension.

In reading a text, the student expects to find answers to several questions and special ideas he is especially interested in. Expectation is inherent in the process of reading. The idea of a dialogue between the reader and the writer is part of the process of predicting and anticipating. Anticipation starts after reading the title of the text. The reader starts to guess about the text and prepares himself actively. So from the first part of the text, the reader can predict the text; for example, what kinds of facts will be discussed and what type of organization will be used by the author. All these lead the students to the active involvement in the reading process.

The following exercise is an example of practicing the skill of anticipation.

**DIRECTION:** Read the passage paragraph by paragraph. Try to predict the opening sentence of the following paragraph. At the end of each paragraph, three choices are given as to what that sentence might be. Choose one of them. You will find the correct answer as you continue reading.

Mary and John went shopping with their car this morning. They were busily talking together about some of their future plans.

(Here, the student reads the following choices and tries to predict the next sentence.)

- a. They were talking about the weather    b. They were discussing the traffic    c. They were talking about the party for which they were going to buy some food

(After choosing one of the above, he continues reading.)

They were talking about the party for which they were going to buy some food. Though Mary wanted to buy ready made food, John preferred to buy some

fresh food and prepare it at home. At that moment, they heard somebody blowing a whistle.

a. It was one of their friends    b. It was the policeman  
c. It was the driver of another car

It was the policeman. He wanted them to stop promptly. Though John could not understand the reason at first, Mary grasped the situation immediately.

a. They were on the wrong way    b. The policeman wanted to check his licence  
c. The red light was on

They were talking so busily that they did not even notice that the red light was on.

Besides making use of these two strategies, it has been suggested that students should be familiar with paragraph organization in order to recognize the main idea in a reading selection. In most cases, the author gives the main idea in the first sentence of each paragraph. Then he adds details to support that argument throughout the paragraph. In another article, the author starts a paragraph with a minor point and then broadens out by inserting supporting arguments until he ends the paragraph with the main idea.

In a reading passage, the main idea can be introduced either in the introductory or in the last paragraphs of the text.

In the following drill, the students have to use their inference and predicting skills in order to recognize the main idea.

DIRECTION: Given the first and the last paragraphs of an article (Grellet, 71) can you tell what the article is about?

Travis Walton disappears

ONLY WEEKS after NBC had screened a programme on the Hill case in 1975, the strange tale surfaced of Travis Walton, an Arizona woodcutter who disappeared for five days in November 1975 after his colleagues claimed to have seen him taken aboard a flying saucer. As the Express recounted on February 24:

The moral is that UFOlogists should admit that there are two sides to even their best stories. And journalists should be more careful about trusting them.

The article tells us that

a. T.Walton has never been found again    b. T.Walton probably left in a UFO    c. T.Walton's friends killed him    d. There is no doubt that T.Walton disappeared in a flying saucer    e. T.Walton and his friends probably lied, and he never really disappeared

DIRECTION: Read the following passage (Johnson, 10).

Vagrancy has long been a problem in both Europe and America. Indeed, the first mention of the problem in Britain was made in A.D 368. Vagrants-people, that is, not living in one fixed place but moving from town to town-have always been severely punished by the law; more severely in many countries than drunks or beggars. 'Everyone', the law says, 'must have a bedroom.'

Which of these best describes the writer's main idea?  
 a. compares punishments for vagrancy, drunkenness, and beginning    b. says that vagrancy has long been a problem    c. gives a short history of vagrancy

In distinguishing between the main and the supporting points the student should make use of the paragraph organiza-

tion. The student has to keep in mind that generally the main idea is mentioned in the first sentence of the paragraph. After recognizing the main idea, the student will find it easier to identify supporting points; in this case, comparing punishments for vagrancy, drunkenness, and begging. Furthermore, a short history of vagrancy can also be considered another supporting point.

d. Reading Critically.

Another important subskill with regard to comprehension is reading critically: the ability to read with analysis and judgement. This might not have been mastered by advanced students during their previous instruction. Therefore, more emphasis has to be put on critical reading in advanced reading programs.

Understanding the author's purpose in writing that specific text is an essential point in reading comprehension. Furthermore, in order to evaluate the text as a whole, the reader has to discriminate fact from opinion and judge the author's ideas, assumptions, and his inferences from the discussion:

An independent, efficient reader must be able to argue against the author's views with his own opinions and beliefs. Therefore, an advanced learner can be trained in comparing the author's views with his own ideas and pointing out similarities and differences. In order to evaluate the text as a whole, the reader has to pay attention to the choice of words, selection of facts, organization of the material, and the presentation of the writer's ideas in the text.

As Harris and Sipay (345) point out, in order to read critically the reader should be able to think critically. Thinking critically requires some background knowledge and experience in that particular field. In addition to this, the reader should be open minded in accepting or at least in listening to several different views. Discussing a new concept without completely accepting or rejecting it at first is great help in the reader's evaluation of the content. In order to develop the skill of reading critically, the reader should be neutral in evaluating the texts.

The following drill aims at developing reading critically, that is, the reader should not accept or refuse a new concept immediately.

**DIRECTION:** Read the following passage (Spache and Berg, 146). What is your criticism? Answer the questions underneath.

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Jury:  
 Just look at Mrs. James, my client.  
 How could she have possibly committed  
 this terrible crime? You can see she  
 is a good, Christian mother with two  
 lovely, healthy children. She has  
 given these children and her poor dead  
 husband the best years of her life.  
 Happily married for twenty years,  
 now she must face life without her  
 helpmate.

Do you believe that she has committed that crime or not? Does the lawyer's emotional speech have an effect on you?

At an advanced level, the students might be introduced to texts that require one's own interpretation. For example, given a specific poem which is appropriate to their level the

students can be asked to make their own interpretations.

Making interpretations which is essentially based on comprehension is considered one of the most advanced skills in foreign language learning.

**DIRECTION:** Read the text "Self-Identification and Self-Expression" (Spache and Berg, 224-226) in Appendix IV. Do you agree with the writer's ideas? In what respects do you agree or disagree with the facts or opinions presented in the passage? Discuss.

Having discussed criteria that need to be considered in text selection and the basic reading skills with illustrative examples, we can proceed to analyze techniques and approaches in teaching reading in an EFL classroom.

### III. TEACHING READING IN AN EFL CLASSROOM

#### A. Techniques and Approaches in Teaching Reading Skills

Different types of texts require different methods of exploitation. Every reading lesson may not follow the same strict organizational pattern. In this section, some techniques and approaches are discussed in teaching reading skills, focusing on the teaching of vocabulary, structure, and meaning in the three phases of reading, namely, pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading. Suggestions are illustrated later in a sample text.

##### 1. Pre-reading

It is generally accepted that the reading process has three phases. The initial stage which is basically the introduction phase to the material is known as the pre-reading phase.

Reading is an individual process; yet it should be considered also one part of language learning which requires team work to some extent. Considering the fact that language learning depends not only on the teacher but on the learner as well, the student is responsible for his own improvement to a great extent.

As discussed in the first section of Chapter II, the aim of a reading program for advanced students is to lead them to reading authentic texts, with no guidance or with little help, silently at an appropriate speed with adequate comprehension. If our specific aim is to discuss techniques

and approaches in teaching reading skills in an EFL classroom, this discussion also has to fulfill the general aim of the reading program. One of the questions that has been raised is what kind of guidance can be given to the learners so that the whole purpose of the reading program is fulfilled. Another point that has to be kept in mind is how the teacher can help the advanced students in becoming effective, independent readers.

Reading lessons are generally developed around a reading selection which varies from a short paragraph to several pages of text. A traditional language teacher may just say, "Please turn to page 10 and read the selection about air pollution, then answer the questions at the end." However, this approach to a reading text cannot motivate the readers at all. As discussed in the second Chapter (B2), arousing interest in the text is the most important point that has to be taken into consideration in the introduction phase. Therefore, the instructor should create a positive attitude towards the text by discussing several points of the selection and relating these to the reader's personal experiences.

One way of starting a discussion is by showing pictures about the reading passage. The students are asked to tell a story of their own about these pictures. The aim of this activity is to get the students involved in the text relating the discussion to the reader's experience. The teacher leads the learners by posing some questions relevant to this picture.

Instead of showing pictures, the instructor can introduce the text only by giving a list of key words. By making

use of these words, the students create a story of their own. This story might be completely different from what they are going to read. On the other hand, the students can bring out some of the points that are discussed in the passage (See Drill 1 in IIIB).

Another way of starting a discussion is just announcing topic and allowing the students to discuss it freely. In this way, the teacher can get information about the learners' knowledge of that topic and can decide how this knowledge can be used in further reading activities. Even though there may be students who are interested in a particular subject, introduction of the topic with its preliminary discussion can lead them in the right direction toward the text.

At an advanced level, the students are assumed to have acquired mastery of the grammar of the foreign language to a great extent. However, they may face structural difficulties in some of the texts. Based on personal experience, it can be said that linguistic complexity can prevent the reader's comprehension of a text. Therefore, in such a case language preparation can be done. Language preparation does not mean to teach each lexical item and structure in the text, but it means giving adequate information about the new structures and unfamiliar lexical items in order to minimize problems that might prevent the learner's understanding of the text. The most suitable time for this preliminary vocabulary and grammar teaching is the pre-reading phase.

In the area of vocabulary, content words that are vital to the understanding of the text should be taught (See the vocabulary list in IIIB). There can be some unim-

portant words that need not be learned. On the other hand, the meaning of some of them might be drawn out of the text while reading. As Harris and Sipay (165-173) suggest, the reader can be given several cues which help him to exploit redundancies and demonstrate that meaning can be extracted even though one does not know each word.

At the pre-reading phase, the teaching of those lexical items that will fulfill the immediate needs of the students takes place. It does not have the purpose of expanding the learners vocabulary knowledge as the general aim of the while-reading phase. Over-emphasis on understanding individual words perpetuates the misconception that understanding depends totally on the knowledge of vocabulary. As discussion points out, knowing each word beforehand prevents the student from developing the skills of predicting. Furthermore, he cannot learn to proceed beyond the word or sentence which causes difficulty. The greatest disadvantage of knowing each word beforehand is that it prevents the student from becoming an independent, efficient reader which is the major goal of an advanced reading program.

It has been generally considered that the aim of the reading program for advanced students is not to teach grammar. However, as discussed earlier, complex structures are introduced to the students to facilitate learning. The aim here is not to master the grammatical structure but to understand it so that it will not prevent the learners from comprehending the text adequately. As this is not a grammar lesson, there is no use in having intense structure drills. Instead of structure drills, transformational exercises can be planned

to familiarize the students with the structure. In transformational exercises, the students are asked to rewrite the same sentence in another way. Rewriting the sentence in a different way helps the student comprehend the text better (See Drill 2).

At this point a question can be raised about the emphasis on these new grammar patterns. What should the criteria be in selecting these new complex structures? New structures can be selected according to the needs of the learners and the frequency of occurrence. Interaction between the grammar and the reading teachers is suggested as a necessary activity at this phase. The reading teacher can contact the grammar teacher to point out the structural difficulties. In this way, a new structure which is introduced in the reading lesson can be discussed in detail and practiced more in the grammar lesson.

As discussed in Chapter II, most of the time the students do not have the opportunity to select their own reading material. Taking this into consideration, the instructor of the reading program has to set a purpose for reading for the students to make the text more meaningful. In order to fulfill this purpose, general questions can be introduced to guide the students. These will help the students in focusing on certain parts of the text. Another function of these target questions is helping the students to become more interested in the reading passage. These sign-post questions<sup>1</sup>, as referred to by Nuttall (158), can be given just before the introduction of the text. They are either Yes/No or True/False or Wh-type questions (See Drill 3). Therefore, the aim of the

general comprehension questions, as opposed to those at the while-reading phase, is to lead the learners to the right mood in order to get them involved in the reading passage and focused on the main points.

Because the organization of the lesson cannot always be strict, a purpose for reading is set either at the end of pre-reading or at the beginning of while-reading phase.

## 2. While-reading

This phase which basically draws on the text has been generally regarded as the climax of the reading activity. In an advanced program, the aim is to help students understand the structure and content of the text. In order to fulfill the main objective of the reading program for an advanced level-to develop reading skills in order to become independent, efficient readers- the students have to be trained to read with little help or with no guidance. They can work in groups or in pairs for this purpose.

Setting a specific purpose for reading gets the student involved in the text. If he knows why he is reading that particular text, he will be more interested and therefore, he will try to look for answers to his specific questions. These can be either asking him to read in order to find a specific piece of information or to find the main idea of the text. In some texts, two different tasks can be assigned at the same time.

The general tendency is to deal with a text as a whole. Since interruptions which break down the communication between the writer and the reader will be a hindrance for the student's

comprehension, the text should be read as a whole. After the student reads the passage once, general questions that are assigned earlier can be discussed in the classroom. The instructor should be careful that all the students participate in this discussion.

In case of comprehension problems, the following techniques of comprehensive reading can be tried:

a. Vocabulary Recognition.

Vocabulary recognition can be developed through interpreting reference terms and discourse markers, word analysis, guessing the meaning from the context or, as a last resort, looking up the unknown word in the dictionary. Interpreting reference terms and recognizing the rhetorical value of discourse markers help the students comprehend the text better (See Drills 4 and 5).

Besides interpreting reference terms and discourse markers, the students are asked to make use of affixes and roots in getting the meaning of an unknown lexical item (See IIIBa). On the other hand, as Steinberg (6) suggests, contextual clues are used to deduce the meaning of an unfamiliar word. According to this view, the meaning of an unknown item is understood from the known.

The aim here is beyond the purpose of vocabulary teaching, which is to introduce the content words that are vital to the understanding of the text, at the pre-reading phase. The essential objective in vocabulary teaching at the while-reading is to expand the vocabulary knowledge of the students, so that they will face no or little lexical difficulty.

Besides word analysis and deducing the meaning through context, sense and experience may also help the student to understand the meaning of an unfamiliar lexical item. The last solution is looking up the unknown word in the dictionary, but this should not be resorted to too frequently.

b. Sentence Comprehension.

Although a student understands each word in a sentence, sometimes he cannot get the meaning of the whole sentence. In such a case, sentence analysis is made by breaking the complex sentence into its components (See Drill 6). The core of the sentence, that is, subject-object-verb should be distinguished from the other parts, such as modifiers and relative clauses.

In this kind of sentence analysis, the aim is to analyze sentences that are vital in comprehending the text. In addition to this type of sentence analysis, word order and punctuation marks are contextual aids in sentence comprehension. Since punctuation helps to convey the writer's ideas, the reader who recognizes the significance of these marks can follow the author's points more easily. At this point, it is assumed the students do not have any problems with regard to the grammatical structures.

c. Paragraph Analysis.

Though the reader understands all the sentences in a reading passage, sometimes he cannot get the overall message due to the fact that he does not know how the material is organized. Thus in order to understand the organization of the material, the reader has to practice the following points: finding the main idea, finding the supporting arguments, and

drawing inferences. These skills and strategies can be developed in certain ways as discussed in the second Chapter (See IIC). Furthermore, detailed comprehension questions are posited to help the students comprehend the text better. These questions make the students consider the text as a whole rather than think on each sentence. There can be questions whose answers are directly and explicitly available. On the other hand, in some questions the students have to consider what is implied but not explicitly stated. These are more difficult questions, compared to the general questions given at the pre-reading phase, because the learners have to understand the text well enough to answer these questions of inference and of detailed comprehension (See Drill 7).

After discussing comprehension questions, another task, such as scanning the text to find a synonym for a particular word, can be set for the students. The learners must find the appropriate words for the given definitions (See Drill 8). The aim of this activity is to extend another reading skill and also to improve the vocabulary knowledge of the students.

Another activity that can be held at the while-reading phase is that which asks the students to complete diagrams and maps which accompany the reading passage. The text should be appropriate for this activity.

Activities in an EFL classroom can take place as a group or pair work which makes the lesson more enjoyable. Yet individual work has to be encouraged, too. Thus guidance of the teacher should be well balanced with the individual work. These suitable for these purposes are selected by the instructor of the reading program for advanced students.

### 3. Post-reading

At this phase, the ultimate aim is mastering the skill of approaching the text with no guidance and getting the meaning fully. Specific aims are to consolidate what has been read and to relate the text to the learner's own knowledge, interests and views. Having read the selection global understanding of the material can be achieved by evaluating the text as a whole.

Instead of just answering the comprehension questions and then continuing the reading lesson with another selection, the instructor has to lead some post-reading activities that will keep the students' interests. Some activities along this purpose are as follows:

a. Linking the Content to the Reader's Own Experience and Life.

The students can be asked to relate the content of the reading selection to their own experiences. They are asked to judge the arguments presented in the text. They can express the points they agree with and other ideas they cannot accept. Comparisons and contrasts can be drawn between facts and opinions. In this way, personal response from the reader is drawn (See Drill 9.1).

b. Discussion of One Issue Relevant to the Content of the Passage.

The students can work in groups for this activity. Picking up one issue relevant to the topic of the text, they can discuss it among themselves. Later, one student from each group reports their conclusions about that specific

issue to the other groups. This kind of activity involves the reader in making a judgement about the text in terms of what the writer is trying to do (See Drill 9.2).

c. Application.

Though it seems to be a bit ambitious, after reading an article which deals with theories and principles, these can be applied. Cause and effect relationships are recognized and pointed out in further discussions.

d. Linking the Two Skills: Reading and Writing.

In order to link the skills of reading and writing, the students can be asked to write one paragraph summary of the reading passage. This also helps the readers comprehend the text as a whole. Besides the summary, the students can also be asked to write a composition on a special topic that is relevant to the reading passage (See Drill 10).

## B. Sample Text

The points that are discussed in this chapter will be illustrated in the text "Being Seen, Heard, and Understood " (See Appendix VI).

Various drills for different purposes are suggested at three phases of reading. These drills fulfill the main objective of the reading program for advanced students, that is, to develop independent, efficient readers. Objectives for activities are grouped as follows:

- I. Comprehension
- II. Structure
  1. Lexical Units
  2. Sentence
  3. Paragraph
- III. Application and Evaluation

In order to fulfill the objective of comprehension, general questions and detailed comprehension questions are formulated. Transformational exercises have a structural objective, whereas interpreting reference terms, discourse markers, and finding the appropriate words for the given definitions have lexical objectives. Sentence analysis aims at fulfilling a sentential component. The students are asked to write the main ideas of each paragraph to demonstrate their skill of comprehension. Furthermore, questions of personal response and of inference are asked the students to evaluate their comprehension of the text. They can be required to write a composition on a relevant topic in order to apply what they

have read.

At the pre-reading phase, the teacher hangs the cartoon (See Appendix V) on the blackboard so that each student can see it easily. After letting them observe the picture for one or two minutes, the teacher asks the students what they can tell him about it. The students are guided by the following questions:

Who do you think the man is?

What might he be doing over there?

Why do you think so many people are gathered?

What do you think about the man's psychological mood?

On the other hand, instead of presenting the cartoon, the teacher can merely introduce the topic of the text - "Being Seen, Heard, and Understood." The students are allowed to discuss the topic freely. The students might start talking about visual and auditory organs or mental process or speech.

Yet another way of introducing the text is giving a list of key words. Given the following list, the students are asked to tell what these words mean to them. They try to create a story of their own by making use of these words.

#### DRILL 1

DIRECTION: Read the following list. Create a story by using these words.

audience

empathy

communication

mimicry

vision

attention

tension

adaptation

Discussions on the topic and the content of the selection should not take more than five minutes of the reading lesson.

After this introduction, which helps the students create a positive attitude towards the text, the teacher continues with preliminary vocabulary teaching. In this reading passage, the following content words are vital to the understanding of the text. Others are left to the students to be understood through contextual clues.

Vocabulary List:

gesture	converse	intensify
empathy	painstakingly	evoke
belligerently	distract	phenomenon
mimicry	inherent	amplify

The meaning of these words are either explained to the students by illustrations and gestures or the definitions are given explicitly.

At the pre-reading stage, a new structure is introduced to the students. If the students do not know the "if...then" structure, it will be presented to them with a relevant example, such as

If you buy that car, you will enjoy driving it.

DRILL 2

DIRECTION: Read the following sentences. Then rewrite them beginning with "unless..".

If you come at six o'clock, we will go to the party.  
 She will go for a walk, if the weather is fine.  
 If I save that money, I will buy a new car.

These exercises which aim at getting the students involved in the new structure should not take more than five minutes, so totally pre-reading activities fill ten minutes of the lesson. In case of problems with the structure, it is studied and practiced in more detail in the grammar lesson.

At the end of the pre-reading phase, just before reading the text, three general questions are given to help the students focus on the most important points in the selection.

### DRILL 3

DIRECTION: Read the text "Being Seen, Heard, and Understood", keeping in mind the following questions.

1. What are those things that are significant in communication?
2. Does action have a positive effect on the audience?
3. Are gestures important in communication?

Besides asking these three target questions, the instructor sets a purpose for reading the text. In this text, the student should develop his comprehension skill by understanding the main idea, distinguishing the major and the minor points, drawing inferences, and understanding the author's organization of ideas.

While-reading activities start with the reading of the passage which should not take more than seven minutes. After completing the reading of the material, the students discuss the three questions mentioned above. In case of comprehension problems, some practice in vocabulary recognition, sentence,

and paragraph analysis are done. These while-reading activities, except the discussion of comprehension questions, should be made in ten minutes.

a. Vocabulary Recognition.

Two examples that can be given for word recognition are conversationalist and torso. The student understands the meaning of conversationalist through word analysis. Converse means to talk informally; -tion is the noun suffix meaning "the action of talking"; -al is the adjective suffix commonly used in conversation; -ist is the noun suffix that refers to the person that performs the action of the root. The meaning is derived as the person who spends much time in conversation.

Another example given for word recognition is torso. Being unaware of the meaning of the word, the students have to make use of the information provided in the paragraph. The author talks about various parts of the body and the stretching of torso. Here the learners have to infer the meaning as one part of the body.

Besides vocabulary recognition through word analysis and context, interpreting reference terms and discourse markers helps the readers recognize the necessary information.

DRILL 4

DIRECTION: What do these underlined terms refer to in the text?

- Fourth paragraph line 6 - Their
- Eighth paragraph line 11 - Those
- Tenth paragraph line 5 - It
- Last paragraph line 13 - This
- Second paragraph line 4 - Its

## DRILL 5

DIRECTION: What is the rhetorical value of each underlined discourse marker?

Fifth paragraph line 6 - Yet  
 Eighth paragraph line 1 - For example  
 Ninth paragraph line 8 - Then  
 Thirteenth paragraph line 6 - So

b. Sentence Comprehension.

Sentence analysis is made when the students face a complex sentence, such as the one in paragraph 16 line 4.

If gesture comes so naturally to the good conversationalist that he cannot converse effectively without it, it will also be of value in the more important and larger conversations that the public speakers carries on with his audience.

## DRILL 6

DIRECTION: Read the above sentence and distinguish the main verb, subject, object, and complement.

Besides sentence analysis, emphasis needs to be put on punctuation in order to follow the author's ideas. The comma after it in the above example points out a sequence of events.

c. Paragraph Analysis.

At this point of the while-reading activities, the students are asked to write the main idea of each paragraph in one sentence. After asking the students to read their own sentences about the main idea of each paragraph, more detailed comprehension questions are posited to the students.

## DRILL 7

DIRECTION: Read the following questions and answer them comprehensively.

1. What is the importance of the 'mind' in communication?
2. What are the qualities of a good speaker?
3. Why do conversationalists use gestures?
4. In what ways do the speaker's gestures affect the audience?
5. What arguments does the author make about the belief that the gestures are an essential part of communication by speech?
6. How does the author define 'thinking'?

After discussing the comprehension questions which is an important while-reading activity in 12 minutes, another purpose for reading is set by the teacher. Working in pairs, the students are asked to scan the text in order to find the words that mean the following things.

## DRILL 8

DIRECTION: Scan the text to find the words that have the following meaning:

to go along

choice

interfering with

an integral part of

to reveal or display; open

to draw away or divert as the mind or attention

As a post-reading activity, the content is related to the reader's own experience and life. In the following

drill, there are questions of evaluation and of personal response. Post-reading activities should take ten minutes.

#### DRILL 9

**DIRECTION:** Read the following questions and answer them, comparing your ideas with the writer's.

1. Do you agree with the author's definition of "thinking"? Support your answer with an example.
2. Do you believe that gestures are extremely important in communication by speech? If they are important, why? If not, what is significant in communication? Support your arguments with examples.

For the second question, the students are divided into two groups -one group which agrees with the author's ideas and the other which is against these views. First, each group discusses its argument, then the two groups put forward their opposing arguments supporting them with examples.

In order to integrate the skills of reading and writing, the students are asked to write a one paragraph summary of the reading passage. Furthermore, the learners are also required to write a composition,

#### DRILL 10

**DIRECTION:** Write a composition on the following topic.

Suppose that there will be elections for the president of the student council at your school. Being one of the candidates, you are asked to make a speech at the assembly. What would be your criteria in preparing yourself for this speech? In what ways would you plan to affect your audience if you were given such an opportunity?

The students are asked to start writing this composition in class. If they are not able to finish it during the class time, they are asked to continue writing it at home. In the next reading lesson, the teacher asks some of them to read aloud in class. Those compositions that are really moving are hung on the bulletin board.

Various techniques and approaches in teaching reading to advanced students are discussed at three phases and illustrated in a sample text. Chapter IV presents improvements that can be achieved in reading comprehension.

## FOOTNOTE

<sup>1</sup>Sign-post questions are those that lead the students to the most important points in the text. Their purpose is not to test but to lead the learners to comprehending the text adequately.

## IV. IMPROVEMENT IN READING COMPREHENSION

### A. Improvements Related to the Students of the Program

Learning a foreign language is a two-way process which depends not only on the instructor but on the students as well. In order to develop independent, efficient readers in a reading program, improvements should be made related to the students, the instructor, and the course activities. The course activities are not considered a separate section in this discussion. These activities are mentioned within the discussion of improvements related to the students and improvements related to the instructor.

As discussed earlier, reading comprehension involves the integration of visual, mechanical skills of recognition and comprehension. At an advanced level, the students are assumed to have mastered the skill of visual recognition of words (i.e decoding) at their previous levels of instruction. Thus at an advanced level, emphasis should be put on mastering the skill of comprehension which involves several subskills that have been discussed in the second Chapter (See C3). Apart from these activities the major improvements can be done in the following areas:

1. Vocabulary knowledge
2. The skill of comprehension
3. Text selection
4. Development of other skills

## 1. Vocabulary Knowledge

One of the main difficulties of a foreign language reader is his inadequate vocabulary. Although reading comprehension involves much more than simply knowing the meaning of individual words, an understanding of the author's words is a minimal essential for reading comprehension. The reader should at least know the meaning of words which are vital for adequate comprehension of the text. As discussed in the previous chapters, vocabulary is developed in various ways, such as deducing the meaning of an unknown word through word analysis or by using contextual aids or as a last resort, by looking up the unfamiliar lexical item in the dictionary. Besides these, the following practices are suggested for enlarging the student's vocabulary:

### a. Increasing Listening and Speaking Vocabulary.

Increasing listening and speaking vocabulary helps the students decode the printed forms of these words. The students should not forget the fact that the spoken language cannot be separated from the written language. Therefore, paying more attention to the spoken language, the students make use of the vocabulary of spoken language during the reading activity. The student may have heard of the word "contemptuous" in one of the songs. Since he has a general idea of what the song is about, he extracts the meaning of this word. Later when he faces "contemptuous" in a reading passage, he can make use of his previous knowledge of this word.

b. Cloze Test.

Cloze procedure may be used as a teaching device to train the students to extract meaning of unfamiliar words from contextual clues. Cloze exercise makes the learners realize how much the context can help them in determining the unknown lexical item. In the example (See Appendix VII), the students are given a passage and asked to figure out the missing words. The first two sentences are given to provide some background information about the story.

c. Individual Word Study.

The reader should be led into individual word study. He can be motivated to look up the meaning of unknown lexical items or predict their meaning and write them down. The learner should keep a notebook which includes the meaning of words and their different usages so that he can refer to them whenever he faces a lexical difficulty. Though it seems to be a time consuming activity, it has long-term effects on building up vocabulary.

d. Word game.

The students are provided with a word game that call for immediate responses. The students are divided into two groups. The instructor shows a card on which a word is written. The students are required to form a sentence with this word in a minute. The group which has the most comprehensive sentence in employing the word deserves a point. This activity is followed until they reach ten points. If none of the groups use the word in a well-formulated sentence, no point is given.

## 2. The Skill of Comprehension

As discussed earlier, the skill of comprehension is considered the basic reading skill. Insufficiency in grasping the meaning of word groups, sentences, and paragraphs prevents comprehending the text fully. Apart from developing subskills, such as interpreting the reference terms and discourse markers, distinguishing between the main idea and supporting arguments, drawing inferences, and evaluating content as a whole in the ways discussed in Chapter II, emphasis should be put also on reading with a specific aim. Setting a specific task for reading, such as scanning a text for a specific idea, helps the students in getting involved with the text. This increases the comprehension level. Furthermore, as illustrated in the sample text (See Chapter III B), comprehension questions that require inferences from the text, the distinguishing of fact from opinion, and the judging of the author's ideas also guide the students into the right mood for comprehension. The most important point that has to be considered is that the purpose of comprehension questions should not be to test the students' reading comprehension, but to help them comprehend better what they read. Apart from these, emphasis should be put on the following points:

### a. Phrase Reading.

First of all, the students have to be encouraged in phrase reading (Riley, 199). Basically, reading the phrase as a unit of meaning rather than as a perceptual unit should be emphasized. Without attaching meaning to a word or a word group, the student will not be able to deal with it.

Therefore, lists of words and phrases are prepared to direct the learners to read the items focusing on the vertical line drawn through the center.

Adequate comprehension  
 is an important point  
 in reading,  
 Comprehension questions  
 enable the readers  
 to understand  
 the text  
 to some extent.  
 However,  
 reading rate,  
 the nature of the reading passage,  
 and the reading skills  
 have an effect  
 on reading comprehension.

b. Balancing Reading Rate with Comprehension.

In order to improve reading comprehension, the student's reading rate of the material should be balanced with comprehension of the text. Some students have the tendency to read word-by-word which is, in fact, a sign of disability. These slow readers miss both grammar and vocabulary clues because their short-term memory is too short. On the other hand, there are students who read very fast, sacrificing comprehension. Both slow readers and fast readers miss some items which will later prevent their comprehending the text adequately. Considering these, reading activity should take place at such a rate that the students will be able to perceive the printed material as a chunk of visual information and comprehend it adequately. This reading rate is determined by the language level and the capacity of the learner.

c. Teaching Conventions of the Writing System.

In order to improve the skill of comprehension, conventions of the writing systems of English have to be taught. Punctuation marks, capital letters, the significance of italics, type differences, and other signals in print should be acquired in order to comprehend the text adequately.

d. PQRST Study Plan.

PQRST study plan is suggested by Spache and Berg (79) in order to read efficiently.

- P. Preview the passage by reading the title, headings, first and last sentences of paragraphs, and introductory paragraph.
- Q. Question. Try to raise questions during previewing.
- R. Read the text carefully and anticipate what is to come next.
- S. Summarize the text by pointing out the main ideas.
- T. Test yourself by answering the questions you raised during previewing.

e. Role Playing.

The students who are assigned to read a play, later they are asked to perform it in class. The dialogues may not depend totally on the original play. The instructor guides the students by giving them the key words at certain places throughout the performance. Through dramatization, the students are led to use the language to communicate. They not only gain an understanding of the structures in context but use the language to influence others as well.

f. Activities by Using Facilities.

Various technological developments can have a positive effect on reading comprehension. These facilities are overhead projectors, videos, and tapes.

By using an overhead projector, the teacher gives five sentences in a mixed order and asks them to form a paragraph, putting them in the right sequence. Two or more balanced groups are formed for friendly rivalry. Each group competes with the other to be the first with the correct paragraph. After three minutes, the teacher continues with another set of sentences, again assigning the same task. This activity helps the students develop the skill of reading at a faster rate, comprehending each sentence, and then formulating the sentences into a paragraph.

g. Games.

Games break the routine of classroom procedures, providing relaxation and adding fun and variety while remaining within the framework of language learning.

A game is played involving the recognition of the most important points of a reading passage. This game can be named When/What/Where. After reading a short passage, the instructor asks one of the students this question: "What happens in the story?" After answering this question, the student posits another question to his friend: "When does it happen?" Each student asks a question when his turn comes, such as "Where does it take place?" Another student is obliged to give an answer. This activity is sustained through reading several short passages.

#### h. Other Activities.

Given a passage with two/three irrelevant sentences, the students are asked to point out the irrelevant parts. This activity takes place as a pair or individual work. Weeding out the irrelevant parts, the students write the original correct passage.

#### i. Extensive Reading.

Apart from these suggested activities, extensive reading which is reading outside the classroom is one of the most effective ways of improving reading comprehension. In extensive reading, books/magazines/articles are either assigned by the teacher or they are chosen by the students. In extensive reading, the students do not have to put emphasis on each word or phrase. What is important is getting the general idea from the text. In this way, students also enlarge their vocabulary by deducing the meaning of unfamiliar words through contextual clues. Considering the fact that reading improves reading comprehension, the students not only develop their reading skills but also acquire wider knowledge of the target language.

A class library can be established in the classroom for practical purposes. The teacher may ask comprehension questions about what they have read, or the students are required to write a composition on a given topic relevant to the subject of one of the books. For those who are really conscientious in their work, a research or a project is assigned to read further on a special topic. This helps the student toward detailed readings on a particular subject.

In this way, he has the opportunity of developing his writing skill.

### 3. Text Selection

At an advanced level, the students can be asked to make their own text selections. Considering the fact that the aim of a reading program for advanced students is to enable the learners to read authentic texts independently, they have to be led towards choosing their own reading materials. After the instruction at their institutions, the learners are left with no guidance for their own studies. They should be able to make the right choice in text selection appropriate to their immediate needs, such as the need to read a professional article or to find a specific piece of information or even for pleasure. Since the students have to select their reading materials in life, opportunity should also be given to them during their advanced levels of instruction. They should have some practice in text selection for their future successes.

### 4. Development of other Language Skills

Since the aim is to teach language as a means of communication, foreign language learners and instructors have to consider the fact that the skills of listening, speaking, writing, and reading are integrated skills that are all required for the effective use of the target language. Reading comprehension should not be considered separately from the other skills. Most of the time the learner relates what he has read to what he writes or talks about something he might have heard or read recently.

Reading and writing skills reinforce each other. Understanding the organization of main ideas and details in a text helps the learner later in writing a composition. Thus activities such as note-taking, summarizing, and outlining the text not only help the students comprehend the passage better, but link the two skills, namely, reading and writing. On the other hand, the written language is another form of the spoken language. Therefore, any improvement in the spoken language helps the students with the written language, too. Through discussions and follow-up activities, the learners develop their skills of using the language which help them comprehending the text better. Furthermore, developing the skill of listening has an effect on the reading skill. The student might read the same news which he has heard on the radio. This interrelatedness influences reading comprehension positively.

#### B. Improvements Related to the Instructor of the Program

In order to balance the teacher/learner centeredness of the program and basically cultivate in the students the reading skills of the English language, the instructor should go through several levels of instruction. Some of the ways of improving knowledge capacities, and proficiency levels of the teachers are as follows:

1. Pre-training
2. In-service training programs
3. Interaction between the reading teacher and the instructors of other skills.

## 1. Pre-training

The teacher of a reading program should have a teaching certificate. During this preliminary education, the teachers have to take some courses in linguistics and education, such as Measurement and Evaluation, Curriculum Development, Guidance and Counseling, and the methodology of teaching English as a foreign language. Furthermore, in order to deal with all problems, the instructor should have some knowledge of the culture of the target language.

Besides this thorough knowledge of the subject, another important point that should be considered is how the teacher conveys this knowledge. He must be aware of the fact that decoding alone does not mean reading and that extracting meaning from the text is the most important component in the reading process. Considering this, a competent teacher makes use of his background knowledge about a particular topic and his ability in adapting methods and techniques to the classroom situation providing material for group/pair work in order to quicken the students' basic reading skills.

The teacher can prepare a questionnaire to be answered frankly by the students for the evaluation of the course (See Appendix VIII). The instructor can modify the program depending on the responses of the students.

## 2. In-service Training Programs

In service-training programs have to be provided for the teachers in order to help them follow the current development in teaching reading. These programs have to fulfill the basic and immediate needs of the participants who might be

specialized or inexperienced reading teachers. Apart from in-service training programs, seminars aiming at gathering instructors from different institutions to have them exchange ideas about practical experiences, should be organized. Reading programs are developed, depending on specified objectives. These programs are later adapted by each instructor to his own institution. The papers which have been heard during the seminar are collected in a paperback. These copies are sent to other institutions which have reading programs, so that the majority of the people can benefit from the recent developments.

### 3. Interaction between the Reading Teacher and the Instructors of other Skills

Besides cooperation among instructors from various institutions, interaction between the reading teacher and the instructors of other skills in the same institution is also crucial.

As discussed earlier, those grammar items that cannot be studied and practiced in detail in a reading lesson may be dealt with in a grammar lesson. Furthermore, problems the students face in a reading selection due to the style of the author or the organization of the facts/ideas may be explained clearly and illustrated in a sample composition during a writing lesson. The reading instructor should follow his students' progress in other lessons, too. Consequently, cooperation among the instructors helps the learners develop their language skills and their effective use of the language.

## CONCLUSION

Teaching a foreign language has been thought of as developing particular skills, namely writing in the Grammar-Translation Method, listening and writing in the Direct Method, reading in the Reading Method, listening and speaking in the Audio-Lingual Method. After the 1970's, with the rise of the Communicative Approach emphasis has been put on all four skills in order to prepare the learner to meet the demands of real communication. Within this framework of language learning, reading is thought of as a process that underlies communicative activity.

This study concerned various techniques and approaches in teaching reading skills to advanced students. During this discussion, the objective of the reading program is defined as developing independent readers who can read unknown authentic material with adequate comprehension. In a reading program, the text is the most important medium through which the writer conveys his message. As discussed in Chapter IIB, authentic texts which appeal to the interests of the students and which are also appropriate to their linguistic level have to be given priority.

The foreign language learner reads in different ways depending on the purpose and the type of the text. Skimming, scanning, and comprehending are considered the three major reading skills that help the students comprehend the text adequately. At an advanced level, these skills with other subskills and strategies, which will enable the students to become independent, efficient readers, are practiced in more

complicated texts.

Basic reading skills are taught through various techniques and approaches in an EFL classroom. Different approaches to introducing a reading text, the necessity of teaching preliminary vocabulary and structure at the pre-reading phase and the significance of target questions which are introduced just before reading the text have been shown.

At the while-reading phase, various activities, such as word analysis and using contextual aids for vocabulary recognition, sentence analysis, paragraph analysis, and detailed comprehension questions are pointed out for comprehensive reading. Follow-up activities are developed at the post-reading phase to relate the text to the learner's own ideas and experience by evaluating the text as a whole. These points discussed at the three phases of reading have been illustrated in a sample text with concrete examples.

Apart from these activities, various suggestions have been made for improvement in reading comprehension. Major improvements concern the students and the instructor of the program. Improvements in the areas of vocabulary knowledge and the skill of comprehension can be achieved through games, cloze tests, role plays which may be carried out as a pair or group work in the classroom. Though it is not a class activity, extensive reading is suggested to improve reading comprehension based on the fact that reading improves reading. Emphasis is put on the fact that the learners should be given an opportunity to select their reading materials. In addition to these, development of other language skills have been discussed for improvement in reading comprehension. On the other

hand, the proficiency level of the teachers can be improved paying more attention to pre-training and in-service training programs and interaction among the instructors of various skills.

Since this is a limited study, other aspects of reading are not considered in this work. In a wider range of study, a case study can be made identifying the specific reading comprehension problems of a particular group. The origin of these problems can be investigated and then possible remedies sought.

Another point that has not been discussed in this study is whether the Communicative Approach fulfills the desired objective of developing independent, efficient readers. In another study, the concept of notional syllabus which is a practical matter and the issue of functional competence which is more theoretical can be questioned within the framework of the Communicative Approach.

Yet another issue on which further work can be done is the application of these exercises and the evaluation of the results. The exercises which are presented in Chapter II can be practiced and the sample text can be analyzed in the same way suggested in Chapter III in an EFL classroom. The results will need to be evaluated based on personal responses of the students and then conclusions can be drawn. Some modifications on the reading program can be made after this evaluation.

Another aspect of reading is testing reading comprehension which requires a wider range of study. The instructors of a reading program want to know how much the students have

mastered the skill of reading. Through examinations, not only the students are tested but also the course is evaluated.

## APPENDIX I

### The Light Way

Enlightening tips on reducing eyestrain.

Does reading, studying, or other close work make your back and neck muscles throb? Do your eyes water and your head ache by the end of a work day? If you can answer "yes" to any of these symptoms, you may be suffering from eyestrain.

Although eyestrain doesn't cause any organic damage to your eyes, it does produce unnecessary discomfort and, thus, interferes with concentration. If you've been examined by an ophthalmologist or optometrist within the year and don't need eyeglasses or a change in your present prescription, it's possible that poor lighting is the culprit. According to the American Optometric Association, proper lighting is essential for visual comfort whether you're working at your desk or watching television, and it's also necessary if you want to avoid tripping down stairs or scorching your favorite shirt.

Here are some suggestions for making your reading or studying time more enjoyable by making it safer and easier on your eyes.

. The right lighting for a particular activity depends on three things: 1) the job at hand; 2) your immediate work area; and 3) your general surroundings.

If you're working with small details that contrast poorly with their background--such as sewing with dark thread on dark cloth or reading something written in pencil on gray paper--you'll need more light than if you are working with large details that contrast well with their background (reading a clean black-and-white page).

Another thing to remember is that light that's bright enough for a task taking only a few minutes to complete can cause eyestrain if you work on the same task for a longer period of time under the same lighting conditions.

Once you've determined the amount of light you need to do a specific task--without squinting, tilting your head,

or moving your work closer to or farther from your eyes—turn your attention to how you're going to light your immediate work area. You'll need brighter light, for example, over the kitchen sink and counter work areas, where you'll be chopping vegetables or reading a recipe, than you do in your dinette, where soft lighting is more conducive to a relaxing meal. Dimmers—which lower the light level by reducing the flow of electricity to the fixture—achieve this effect and save energy as well. Another way to avoid overlighting an entire room is to install an additional light over the work area, such as above the sink. Three-way bulbs, providing a choice of lighting levels, also save energy if you remember to use the three settings: high for detailed work; medium for less-demanding activities; and low for safe stepping in hallways and on stairs. The low setting also makes a good "night light" for young children.

You'll see and work more efficiently if the light immediately surrounding your work area is positioned so it doesn't cast shadows. This means that the light should come from behind you, not toward you, when you're doing close work. Also, it should come over your left shoulder if you're right-handed and vice versa if you're a southpaw.

Although it's important to achieve the proper lighting conditions in the area where you'll be doing the actual work, it's just as important to consider the light in your general surroundings. Your eyes will feel more comfortable if you adjust your desk lamp so it's no more than three times brighter than the light in the rest of the room. If your surroundings are much brighter or darker than your work area, the pupils in your eyes will be constantly dilating and contracting to adapt to the various levels of light, possibly resulting in eye fatigue. So next time you're working at your desk or reading in bed, don't use only a small high-intensity lamp that's focused directly on your book; turn on an additional light in another part of the room.

Some studies suggest that fluorescent lights may be harmful to your eyes, but to date there has been no evidence substantiating this claim. Many people, however, feel less

comfortable under fluorescent light than they do under incandescent light, possibly because they find the "flicker" aspect of fluorescents disturbing. Another reason may be that light sources emit energy in selective wavelength bands, causing objects to assume different colors. Because incandescent lamps (which produce a warm, white light that tends to be strong in red, orange, or yellow wavelengths) were widely used before fluorescents (which produce a cool, white light that's strong in blue and green wavelengths), we're more familiar with the appearance of objects under incandescent light. But when it comes to energy conservation, the light output from an incandescent bulb is significantly less than that from a fluorescent.

. When watching television, most lighting engineers and vision specialists recommend that the room have soft overall lighting. If the room is totally dark, the contrast between the television screen and the surrounding area strains your eyes. Too much light, however, reduces the contrast on the screen and "washes out" the picture. Before settling in to watch your favorite program, adjust your light sources, making sure glare and reflections from windows and lamps aren't seen on or near the television screen. Then tune the brightness and contrast of the television picture to suit the room lighting.

Are you in the habit of forgetting to take off your sunglasses once you're inside? Optometrists recommend that you don't wear sunglasses inside the house and especially while watching television since they block out too much light for good vision. Sunglasses worn unnecessarily make it difficult for your eyes to adapt promptly to normal light. If you're bothered by the brightness of the television, consult your eye specialist; he may be able to prescribe moderately tinted lenses or lenses more appropriate to the TV viewing distance.

. Did you know that the average 60-year-old needs seven times as much light as the average 20-year-old to perform the same tasks? This need for more light is a direct result of changes in the eye due to aging, and it requires some alterations in habits. Optometrists advise older persons to increase the amount of available light in the room whether they're reading, cooking, or playing cards. They also point out that since

age yellows the eye lens, an elderly person may feel more comfortable under incandescent (yellowish) light than under fluorescent (blue) lights, an important thing to look for in a nursing home.

. Glare-an annoying and distracting brightness that reduces visibility-can usually be eliminated or controlled by adjusting the elements in your environment. For example, you can reduce direct glare from windows by using drapes, shades, or outside awnings. You can also minimize reflected glare from shiny surfaces by using matte (dull) finishes-which diffuse rather than reflect the light-on walls, ceilings, and desks.

And finally, remember that there is an energy crisis. Don't skimp on light when you need it, but rather than over-lighting an entire room, try adjusting your light sources. And when you leave a room, turn off the lights.

## APPENDIX II

ad.vice /əd'vaɪs/ n 1 (U) opinion given by one person to another on how that other should behave or act: I asked the doctor for his advice. 2(C usu.pl.)(esp. in business) a letter, note, or other report, esp. from a distant place giving information about delivery of goods.

ad.vi.sable /əd'vaɪzəbəl/ adj. that is advised or thought best to do; sensible; wise: It is advisable to leave now/that you leave now.

ad.vise /əd'vʌz/ 1 to tell (somebody) what one thinks should be done; give advice to (somebody): I advise waiting till the proper time. 2 fml to give notice to; inform: I have advised her that we are coming.

aer.o.drome /'eərədraʊm/ also (esp. AmE) air field - n esp. BrE a small airport.

aer.o.dy.nam.ic /,eərəudaɪ'næmɪk/ adj. or about AERODYNAMIC -~all adv.

aer.o.plane /'eərəpleɪn/ (AmE air plane)-n BrE a flying vehicle that is heavier than air, that has wings, and has at least one engine.

af.fec.tion /ə'fekʃən/ n(U) gentle, lasting love, as of a parent for its child; fondness.

af.fec.tion.ate /ə'fekʃənɪt/ adj. showing gentle love -~ly adv: He signed the letter "Affectionately, your brother Bill"

af.fin.i.ty /ə'fɪnɪti/ n U;C (between, with) relationship, close likeness, or connection; The French and Italian languages have many affinities.

## APPENDIX III

## BBC 1

- 5.10 Break Point. Part two of the serial about junior tennis players (Ceefax titles page 170 (r))
- 5.40 Sixty Minutes includes news from Moira Stuart at 5.40; weather at 5.54; regional magazines at 5.55; and news headlines at 6.38
- 6.40 Cartoon: Tom and Jerry
- 6.50 Film: The Wrong Box (1966) starring John Mills, Ralph Richardson and Nanette Newman. Victorian comedy about two elderly brothers each of whom will receive a large legacy on the death of the others. Superb comedy cast includes Peter Sellers and Tony Hancock. Directed by Bryan Forbes
- 8.30 The Day of the Triffids. The final part of the serial based on the science fiction novel by John Wyndham
- 9.00 News with Sue Lawley
- 9.25 O.E.D. in at the Deep End presented by Anthony Clare examines the world of the deep sea diver (Ceefax titles page 170) (see Choice)
- 9.55 Sportsnight introduced by Harry Carpenter includes International boxing from tonight's promotion at the Royal Albert Hall; the final of the Greyhound TV. Derby from Wimbledon and a portrait of United States runner Mary Decker
- 11.10 Remington Steele investigate the suicide of a plastic surgeon
- 12.00 News headlines and weather

## CHANNEL 4

- 6.30 Flashback. The final programme of the series examining film and television portrayal of the family reaches the 70s
- 7.00 Channel Four News.
- 7.50 Comment. The political snot this week is taken by John Cartwright, SDP member of parliament for Woolwich, Brookside. Damon and Gizzmo are still ensconced in Alan's bungalow despite Gordon's attempts to turf them out; Paul is looking forward to his old film's reunion; Terry hopes to be invited to stay with Michelle over the Easter holidays; while property developer Bill Cummings discusses business matters with Sheila Grant over a bottle of whisky.
- 8.30 Diverse Reports. This edition of the weekly current affairs programme includes socialist feminist Bea Campbell retracing George Orwell's footsteps to Wigan Pier
- 9.00 Film: In for Treatment (1979). This moving story of two men sharing a room in a hospital, who slowly realize that they are suffering from a terminal disease. Dutch-made, it is directed by Erik van Zuylen and Marja Kok, based on an improvised screenplay by Het Werkteater of Amsterdam, a cooperative company of Dutch actors.
- 10.50 Volces. The eighth programme in the series and film-maker Laura Mulvey chairs a discussion on Art After Modernism between cultural theorist Martha Rosler, Norman Rosenthal, exhibition secretary at the Royal Academy of Arts, and art historian John Tagg.
- 11.45 Closedown.

## APPENDIX IV

## Self-Identification and Self-Expression

People today have to a great extent lost their ability to identify with what they do. Few of us can point to our own contribution to society. Technology has made man a machine. The worker is often not a part of the planning or design of the product; the job no longer requires a skilled or able workman, but a reliable employee. In some instances, mechanization of production has reached the point where the operators may neither see the product nor work on it directly. A study of the organization of the factory—an organization that made workers feel isolated, dominated, detached, and discontent—was made by Blauner (1964). His data show that this is not necessarily true of all occupations. Those that entail a good deal of craftsmanship and personal involvement have more satisfactions to offer to workers than mere money.

But when work is only a means of survival, the rewards and satisfactions of life are sought in entertainment or diversions. The questions "Who am I? Where am I going? What do I stand for?" become a serious dilemma. It is not only youth who are searching for identity. Although no one is happy to become a number, we are all rapidly becoming merely a series of numbers for the purposes of tax deductions, bank collections, vehicle identifications, insurance payment, licensing skills, and even hospitalization. In a democratic society it is essential that the individual be able to know what he thinks, say what he feels, and help remake the world around him.

Our educational system has done little to change the increasing loss of identity with oneself. Rewards are given for neat papers, for correct answers, for recalling the proper information. Little is done to stimulate the child to find the rewards from within the learning process: To find satisfaction in solving his own problems, to take pleasure in developing greater knowledge and understanding for its own sake, or to measure success or failure in areas of importance to the self.

To a great extent our educational system is geared toward one phase of growth; intellectual growth. Here learning can be measured easily, but this is defining learning in a very narrow sense. Learning does not merely mean the accumulation of knowledge; it also implies an understanding of how this knowledge can be utilized. We must be able to use senses freely and creatively and develop positive attitudes toward ourselves and our neighbors for this learning to become effective. Children rarely have the opportunity to share ideas and develop attitudes about themselves and others. Although from the outside the school may look like a center of learning, this learning takes place in isolated cells, with fifth graders rarely seeing a kindergarten child except when passing in the halls. Adults are excluded, and except for the teachers, many children see no adults for hours at a time. For a fifth grader, the world is largely made up of other fifth graders. Bronfenbrenner (1970) has warned that, when children have contact only with their agemates, they have no opportunity to learn culturally established patterns of cooperation and mutual concern. He sees the likelihood of a very unfortunate outcome: Increased alienation, indifference, antagonism, and violence.

No art expression is possible without self-identification with the experience expressed. This is one of the basic factors of any creative expression: It is the true expression of the self. The art materials are controlled and manipulated by one individual, and the completed project is his. This is as true at a very young age as it is for the adult artist. It is the individual who uses his art materials and his form of expression according to his own personal experiences. Because these experiences change with growth, self-identification embraces the social, intellectual, emotional, and psychological changes within the child.

There is also the need for the ability to identify with others. To be able to identify with those we fear, those we do not understand, or those who appear strange to us, is essential for a peaceful society that combines humans of different heritages. Scientifically we have made great gains, but

socially we no longer know our immediate neighbors, and are unable to communicate with them peacefully. It is only through self-identification that we can begin to identify with others. As a child identifies himself with his own work, as he learns to appreciate and understand his environment by becoming involved in it, he develops the spirit that helps him understand the needs of his neighbor. The process of creation involves incorporating the self into the activity; the very act of creation provides understanding of the process that others go through in facing their own experiences. To live cooperatively as well-adjusted human beings and to contribute creatively to such a society become most important objectives for education.

The term "self-expression" has often been misunderstood. Self-expression is giving vent in constructive forms to the feelings, emotions, and thoughts of an individual at his own level of development. What matters is the mode of expression, not the content. It is important to mention this, because one of the greatest mistakes that can be made in the use of the term "self-expression" is to think of it in terms of an unstructured or uncontrolled emotion, or, on the other hand, to consider it as mere imitation.

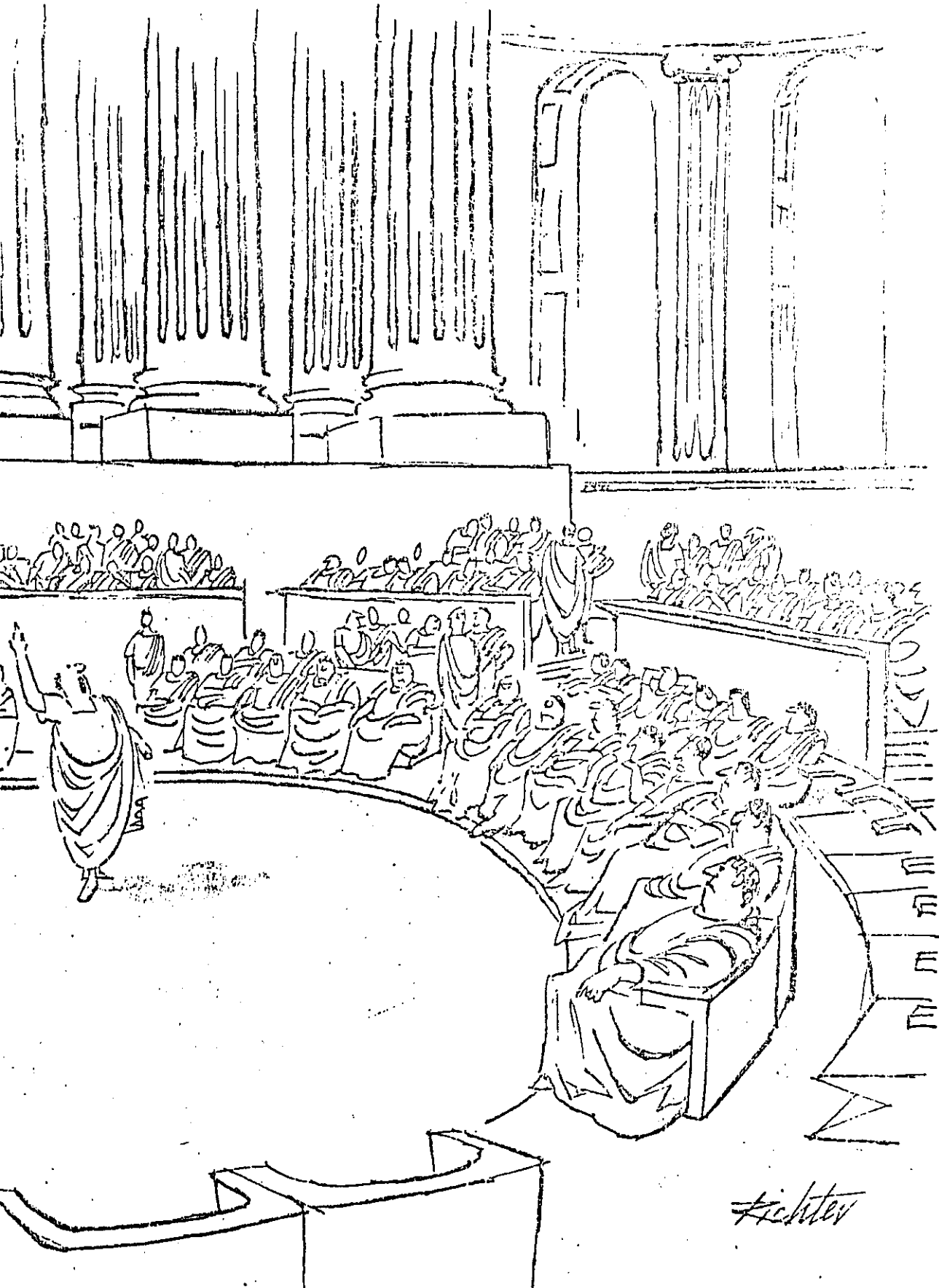
The very young child expresses himself freely through babbling or crying. This may be a truer means of self-expression than a higher form of art, if that work of art is dependent on others or upon imitations of a scene or content that is not relevant to the person producing it. Technical perfection bears little relationship to self-expression; the production of technically excellent art products may be far removed from the real expressive needs of the producer.

There is great satisfaction in expressing one's feelings and emotions in art. Even the very young child who knows nothing about the technical difficulties in pencil rendering, or the various gradations of graphite hardness, can get great satisfaction from making a scribble with a soft pencil. He is expressing his own importance through his own means, and the satisfaction he derives from his achievement is self-evident. The self-confidence that can develop from this type of expression provides the basis for more advanced levels of art.

The child who expresses himself according to his own level becomes encouraged in his own independent thinking and expresses his own thoughts and ideas by his own means. The child who imitates can become dependent in his thinking and rely for his thoughts and expression upon others. Because the imitative child cannot give expression to his own thoughts, his dependency upon others can lead to frustration. The inhibited and restricted child, accustomed to imitation rather than self-expression, leans on parents, teachers, or peers for direction. Art, through self-expression, can develop the self as the important ingredient in experience. Because nearly every emotional or mental disturbance is connected with a lack of self-confidence, it is easy to see how the proper stimulation of the child's creative abilities can provide a safeguard against such disturbances. Autistic children have no capacity for self-identification, and in some cases seem unwilling to admit even their own existence. One method of therapy for them builds up self-respect, supports confidence, and gives a feeling of worth in their own actions (Bettelheim, 1950).

This area of discussion is closely related to the development of self-concept. The individual's own expression is of prime importance, and art probably contributes as much to this area of development as to any other. It has been recognized that young children need to see themselves as being worthy to deal with the complex environment in which they find themselves. This is also true of older children, although the self-concept of ability and attitudes toward achievement are much harder to change as the child grows older. One study attempted to change the self-concept of a group of ninth grade low achievers. Their parents were involved in helping to change that image; as the self-concept of the ninth graders improved, their academic achievement improved (Brookover, 1967).

APPENDIX V



## APPENDIX VI

## Being Seen, Heard, and Understood

A speaker is like a fish in a glass bowl. He is before everybody's eyes, and everything he does is magnified. The things we ordinary mortals do consciously or unconsciously may be pretty bad, yet we get by fairly well off the platform. On the platform it is another story; we've got to do now what we ought to do otherwise. The seeing-of-the-speaker by the audience is an inherent part of the speech itself. We cannot hide behind the miserable excuse that "how a speaker says it is not important; it is what he says that counts," because the audience cannot know what the speaker says except by how he translates it into light waves and sound waves.

## The Basis of Bodily Communication

What do we think with? Only the brain? Hardly. The brain is like a telephone exchange. Without the lines running to it from the outside, it is useless. It is the switchboard but not the whole system. Its function, is to receive incoming signals, make proper connections, and send the messages through to their destination. For efficient service, the body must function as a whole.

We have spoken in the preceding chapter of the speaker's "mental attitude." A good phrase, but where is the "mind?" Is it in the brain? Or perhaps in the nervous system? After all, can we say that the mind is in any particular place? It is not a thing, like a leg, or even the brain. It is a function, an activity. Aristotle, twenty-three hundred years ago, observed that the mind was to the body what cutting was to the ax. When the ax is not in use, there is no cutting. So with the mind. "Mind," said Charles H. Woolbert, "is what the body is doing," We think, not with the cortex, with the brain, or even with the nervous system, but with the brain, the nerves, the glands, and the muscles, working together as a whole.

If this total activity is necessary for thinking, it is also necessary for carrying thought from one person to another. Observe how people go about the business of ordinary conversation. If you have never done this painstakingly, you have a surprise in store, for good conversationalists are almost constantly in motion. Their heads are continually nodding and shaking sometimes so vigorously that you wonder how their necks can stand the strain. The shoulders shrug; the torso stretches, bends, turns, swings, and droops—constantly changing position and attitude. Even the legs and feet are active. As for the hands and arms, they are seldom still for more than a few seconds at a time.

These people, remember, are not making speeches. They are merely common folk trying to make others understand what they have in mind. They are not conscious of movement. Their speech is not studied. They are just human creatures in a human environment, trying to adapt themselves to a social situation. Yet they converse, not only with oral language, but with visible actions that involve practically every muscle in the body.

In short, because people really think all over, a speaker must talk all over if he succeeds in making people think.

#### Language Demands A Visible As Well As An Audible Code

Visible, or sign, language is older than the spoken code. It is written more deeply into our organisms. It carries the basic or stronger impressions. Today, with all our refinement of spoken communication, the eye is still quicker than the ear.

For example, before the speaker utters a word, he begins to carry meanings to all who see him: Does he stand in a timid, withdrawing attitude, or thrust out his jaw belligerently, or smile with winning grace? The audience senses at once the meaning conveyed by the approach. Throughout the speech he carries fine shades of meaning to the audience merely by movements of the body, shoulders, hands, and head; by the

laugh, the smile, the play of features. Even friendliness of manner and charm of personality are carried as much by what is seen as by what is heard. These communications directed to the eye are caught instantly by the audience, whereas those addressed to the ear unfold themselves more slowly. The eye is quicker than the ear.

But the real use of visible signs is to supplement and to interpret words rather than to take their place. Many times words fail completely in conveying meaning unless accompanied by signs. "When you call me that, smile!" said Owen Wister's character in *The Virginian* to a man who addressed him with an epithet. Some words are fighting words unless interpreted by a smile. Yet with a smile a friend may call me "an old crook" and make the words a term of affection. Then again, words take on added or stronger meaning if accompanied by certain movements, such as a nod of the head or a stroke of the hand. One reason why conversationalists use gestures so freely is to intensify and amplify their processes of social adaptation. They do not have to be told to gesture; they do it instinctively. At least, good conversationalists do.

#### The Effect Of Action On The Audience's Attention

Think back over your experience. Did you ever lean forward, muscles tense, while watching an athletic contest? Did you ever feel your muscles pulling and pushing as if to throw a ball, make a catch, shoot a basket, or do any of the things the players are doing? Whether you know it or not you assuredly have engaged in this sort of mimicry. It is the spectator's basis of understanding and enjoyment.

This phenomenon is known as empathy. It may be defined as feeling ourselves into whatever we perceive. All perception, in fact, involves this participation. We not only wind up with the pitcher, swing with the batter, and breast the tape with the sprinter, but also feel ourselves into static situations. When we see a painting or stand before a cathedral, our like or dislike hinges largely on whether the object evokes pleasant or unpleasant stresses and tension in our

bodies. To be sure, we are unconscious of this participation, as we are of our breathing or our heartbeat. But it nevertheless influences our behavior profoundly.

Now apply this to the audience hearing a speech. Unconsciously they are imitating the speaker. The speaker has no option whatever on whether or not his gestures will affect the audience, for his gestures must affect them in one of three ways:

1. If he uses too little action, empathy in the audience will be weak. Because of its weakness, the audience will not remain physically alert, but will relax more into physical (and therefore mental) inaction. But the more one relaxes, the less active the mind becomes, until in complete inactivity one goes to sleep-complete relaxation. So the speaker who does not gesture puts his audience into a state too near to sleep for them to follow alertly what he is saying. They will sit and half listen, but, when he is through, they will recall little of what he has said.

2. If the speaker uses uncontrolled gestures, gestures that he never intended to use and often does not know he is using, the audience will be drawn into fitful and distracting responses. We have all seen the speaker who buttons his coat and then unbuttons it, or twists a handkerchief in his hands, or rocks up and down on his toes, or moves an object on the table before him from one place to another then to another... and to another. "If he moves that watch again, I'll scream," whispered a woman after a speaker had put his watch in twelve or fifteen places over the table. She did not scream, but neither did she listen to what he was saying. She was waiting for his watch to be moved again. So with all people. They are distracted by their empathic reactions to a speaker's uncontrolled movements.

3. If the speaker uses controlled and communicative action, the audience is aroused to an enjoyable participation. They are lifted to alert attention and find it easier to follow what the speaker is saying.

## Shall The Speaker Use Gesture?

We are now in a position to answer the question "Must I use gesture?" If people think all over, and if action is a part of the thinking process, the speaker who uses no action is inhibiting his own thinking. If gesture comes so naturally to the good conversationalist that he cannot converse effectively without it, it will also be of value in the more important and larger conversations that the public speaker carries on with his audience. If gesture is the means of arousing the listeners' attention, then surely it is a foolish speaker who would talk without action.

The question should be restated: "Can I afford to try speaking without gesture-since it is so vital a part of the means of social adaptation?" The answer is "No!" The public speaker, in his capacity of leader, needs every possible means of effectiveness. He cannot afford to deny himself anything that will assist in getting the responses that he wants. If he would hold his place among his fellows, if he would justify his leadership, he must use every possible means of effectiveness. He cannot afford to deny himself anything that will assist in getting the responses that he wants. If he would hold his place among his fellows, if he would justify his leadership, he must use every possible means of effectiveness, and this inevitably includes bodily action.

## APPENDIX VII

The owner of the theatre was worried. Attendances had been falling off and most of the people were not enjoying the play being performed.

The director knew that they must change their \_\_\_\_\_ and discover what really makes people \_\_\_\_\_ in drama. After the war, people's sense of \_\_\_\_\_ seemed to have changed. The new \_\_\_\_\_ does not like what their parents have enjoyed twenty-five years ago.

## APPENDIX VIII

## QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Were the reading texts appropriate to your level?
  - a. never
  - b. sometimes
  - c. always
  
2. Did you receive preliminary lexical/structure teaching before reading the passage?
  - a. very little
  - b. some
  - c. a lot
  
3. Were you satisfied with the while-reading activities?
  - a. very little
  - b. quite
  - c. satisfactory
  
4. How well do you think the post-reading activities were prepared?
  - a. very well
  - b. well enough
  - c. not well enough
  
5. What do you think about the amount of material covered?
  - a. too much material
  - b. right amount of material
  - c. little
  
6. What do you think about the pace of the reading class?
  - a. slow
  - b. just right
  - c. fast

7. How often did you participate in classroom activities, such as answering questions and discussions?
  - a. always
  - b. sometimes
  - c. never
  
8. Do you prefer to select your own reading material?
  - a. yes
  - b. maybe
  - c. no
  
9. Do you believe that you mastered most of the basic reading skills?
  - a. yes
  - b. no
  - c. not sure
  
10. What do you think about your benefit from this program?
  - a. too little
  - b. sufficient
  - c. too much

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