

THEORETICAL BASIS OF TEACHING READING SKILLS

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Reading skills are abilities that pertain to a person's capacity to read, comprehend, interpret and decode written language and texts. Exceptional reading skills can be highly beneficial to assimilating and responding to written communications like emails, messages, letters and other written messages. Reading is about understanding written texts. It is a complex exercise that involves both perception and thought. Reading skill consists of two related processes: word recognition and comprehension. Word recognition refers to the process of perceiving how written symbols correspond to one's spoken language. And what is comprehension? It is the process of making sense of words, sentences and connected text. Readers typically make use of background knowledge, vocabulary, grammatical knowledge, experience with text and other strategies to help them understand written text. Reading skills are the cognitive processes that a reader uses in making sense of a text. For fluent readers, most of the reading skills are employed unconsciously and automatically. When confronted with a challenging text, fluent readers apply these skills consciously and strategically in order to comprehend. There are so many reading skills that pupils need to master to become proficient readers: extracting main idea, reading for specific information, understanding text organization, predicting comprehension, inferring, dealing, checking, understanding writer's style and writing summaries, linking ideas, understanding complex sentences. Just like teaching methodology, reading theories have had their shifts and transitions. Starting from the traditional view which focused on the printed form of a text and moving to the cognitive view that enhanced the role of background knowledge in addition to what appeared on the printed page, they ultimately culminated in the metacognitive view which is now in vogue. It is based on the control and manipulation that a reader can have on the act of comprehending a text. Rumelhart (1977) has also stated that if our schemata are incomplete and do not provide an understanding of the incoming data from the text we will have problems processing and understanding the text. According to Block (1992), there is now no more debate on *"whether reading is a bottom-up, language-based process or a top-down, knowledge-based process."* It is also no more problematic to accept the influence of background knowledge on both L1 and L2

readers. Research has gone even further to define the control readers execute on their ability to understand a text. This control, Block (1992) has referred to as metacognition. Reading, a fundamental skill in every child's cognitive development, invites a diverse array of theoretical models that aim to explain its multifaceted nature. Scholars agree that understanding the **reading process** is an intricate task, as it seamlessly interweaves cognitive, linguistic, and sociocultural dimensions. The **process of reading**, as a result, goes beyond the mere decoding of symbols; it is a dynamic interaction between the text and the reader's **previous knowledge**, beliefs, and attitudes.

Reading becomes effective when teacher starts with words that are familiar to pupils, uses simple structures, blackboard and flashcards and gives emphasis to recognizing and understanding the meaning of a word simultaneously. As far as young elementary learners are concerned teaching reading should be started when a child can learn his her own language. Moreover, the most effective activity is jigsaw. Jigsaw technique is a method of organizing classroom activity that makes students dependent on each other to succeed. It is a cooperative learning method that brings about both individual accountability and achievement of the team goals. Reading is one of the key language skills that pupils should acquire in the process of learning a foreign language. Moreover, it is not only the goal of education but also a means of learning a foreign language as while reading pupils review sounds and letters, vocabulary and grammar, memorize the spelling of words, the meaning of words and word combination i.e. they polish their foreign language knowledge.

CONCLUSION. In the present course paper there has been made an attempt to analyze peculiarities of teaching reading methods in the light of foreign language acquisition and English teaching methodology.

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