

- 16-Ulijn, J.M. and Kempen, G.A.M. 1976. The Role of the First language in Second Language Reading Comprehension. Hochschulverlag, Stuttgart.
- 17-Wallace, Catherine. 1988. Learning to Read in a Multicultural Society. Prentice-Hall Publication.

- 8-Carrell, L. Patricia, Pharis G. B., and Liberto, J. C.
1989. "Metacognitive Strategy Training
for ESL Reading." TESOL Quarterly. 23.
- 9-Celce-Murcia, M. and McIntosh, L. 1979. Teaching
English as a Second or Foreign language.
Newbury House Publishers.
- 10-Chastain, Kenneth, 1988. Developing Second Language
Skills, Theory and practice. Harcourt Brace
Jovanovich publishers.
- 11-Grellet, Françoise. 1981. Developing Reading Skills.
Cambridge University Press.
- 12-O' Malley, J. M., Chamot, A. U. and Manzanares, G. S. 1985.
"Learning Strategy Applications with
Students of English as a Second Language"
TESOL Quarterly 19.
- 13-Oxford, L., Rebecca, 1996. "Use of language learning
Strategies". Applied language learning.
Volume 7. pp. 25-45.
- 14-Spiro, J. Rand, Bertram Bruce, and William Brewer.
1980. Theoretical Issues in Reading
Comprehension. Lawrence Erlbaum
Associates, Inc., Publishers.
- 15-Thompson, Brian, William Tunmer and Tom Nicholson.
1993. Reading Acquisition Process. Multi-
lingual Matters LTD.

Bibliography

- 1-Abraham,G.Roberta and Vann,J.,Roberta,1996.
"Using Task products to Assess Second language learning processes".Applied language learning.Volume 7.pp.61-89.
- 2-Alderson,Charles J.,and A.H.Urquhart,eds.1984.
Reading in a Foreign language.Longman.
- 3-Allen,J.P.B,and S.Pitcorder.1974.Techniques in Applied linguistics. Volume 3.OUP.
- 4-Block,Ellen,1986."The comprehension Strategies of Second language Readers." TESOL Quarterly, 20.
- 5-Brown,A.L.,Armbruster,B.B.,and Baker,L.1986.
"The Role of Metacognition in Reading and Studying".In J.Orasanu(Ed.),Reading Comprehension:From research to practice (pp.49-75).Hillsdale,NJ:Lawrence Erlbaum.
- 6-Brown,D.H.1987. Principles of language Learning and Teaching.Prentice Hall,New Jersey.
- 7-Byrnes,H.1985."Teaching Toward Proficiency: The Receptive Skills".Middlebury,Vt.:Northeast conference Reports, pp.77-107.

Exercise 6

- Specific aim:** To train the students to make predictions and guesses when reading a text.
- Skills involved:** Predicting.
- Why?** When supplying the missing punctuation of a text, we try to predict where the sentences are likely to stop and look for certain words functioning as signals of a new sentence or paragraph.

In the following text, all punctuation has been removed. Can you put it back? Start a new paragraph when you think it is necessary and don't forget part of the text may be a dialogue and will have to be punctuated as such.

he emerged wearing black trousers and a brown-and-white shirt he put on black shoes and slicked his hair with oil from a bottle on the dresser Flora gave Gabi a clean pair of jeans a red-striped shirt and sneakers as they went downstairs Flora said let's go to the A and P things are cheaper there all right I don't care but those people don't sell on credit so what Flora answered crossly we have to economize they passed a record shop Flora give me a dollar Simplicio said I want to buy *La mano de Dios* are you crazy Flora burst out we aren't going to have any money left over and you want to buy a record besides you broke the arm of the record player and that's expensive so don't think we can get it fixed right away I hope it's never fixed because when it works all you do is play records so loud the whole neighborhood can hear ah Flora give it to me Flora opened her purse and threw a dollar bill at her husband.
(From Oscar Lewis: *Days with Simplicio in New York* (Random House, 1965))

Predicting – further hints

- The students can be given unfinished passages and asked to propose an ending.
- Widdowson ('The process and purpose of reading' in *Explorations in Applied Linguistics*) also suggests taking a written text, dividing it into utterances and asking the students to ask pertinent questions about what should follow at differing points in the passage. Thus they will see the various directions in which a text may naturally develop.

Exercise 4

Specific aim: To help the students to recognize the structure of complex sentences.

Skills involved: Understanding relations within the sentence.

Why? In order to read efficiently and not to stumble on every word it will be essential for the students to grasp the structure of the sentences they read at once. They should therefore be taught to discriminate quickly between what is essential (subject – verb – object, i.e. the 'core' of the sentence) and the padding (i.e. modifiers, relative clauses, oppositions, etc.) which, in each sentence, only introduces some further details or qualifies the idea.

Read the following sentences and underline the subject and the main verb of each of them.

'One team that performed more than two hundred operations found that nearly half the patients underwent a change of personality. In one publicized case in England a young salesman with an apparent compulsion to gamble was arrested for larceny.'

Exercise 5

<i>Specific aim:</i>	}	Same as for exercise 4 but the students are asked to divide the sentences of a text into sense groups so as to grasp the structure of the sentences more quickly.
<i>Skills involved:</i>		
<i>Why?</i>		

Divide the following sentences into sense groups.

Here is a possible way of doing it.

You must excuse/a letter from somebody/you may this morning/not even remember./It is the lonely young man/with the black face/beside the door/to whom/you were so kind/last night./I have only just returned/from Cambridge,/to Calcutta,/and know no one here./It was a real ordeal/to find myself/at Government House,/at such a large party,/all alone in the world.

(From *Letters of an Indian Judge to an English Gentlewoman* (Futura, 1970))

Exercise 3

- Specific aim:** To train the students to infer the meaning of unfamiliar words.
- Skills involved:** Deducing the meaning of unfamiliar lexical items through contextual clues.
- Why?** This kind of exercise (cloze exercise) will make the students realize how much the context can help them to find out the meaning of difficult or unfamiliar words.

Read the following paragraph and try to guess the meaning of the word 'zip'.

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. Also we can see scenes in the street, big occasions are *zipped*, such as the Coronation in 1953 and the Opening of Parliament. Perhaps the sufferers from *zip* are the notable people, who, as they step out of an aeroplane, have to face the battery of *zip* cameras and know that every movement, every gesture will be seen by millions of people. Politicians not only have to speak well, they now have to have what is called a '*zip* personality'. Perhaps we can sympathize when Members of Parliament say that they do not want debates to be *zipped*.
(From *Britain in the Modern World* by E. N. Nash and A. M. Newth)

- zip* means cinema
 photography
 television
 telephone

then up the long driveway until he came to the building itself. He had to slow his car and wait in a line with other cars, most of them driven by chauffeurs, stopped by the entrance of the building for a doorman to open the door for their passengers. When Benjamin was beside the entrance an attendant appeared at his car and pulled open the door.
(From C. Webb: *The Graduate* (Penguin, 1968))

The main idea of this passage is that

- Benjamin was going to stay in the Taft Hotel.
- The hotel Benjamin went to was a luxurious one.
- There was an attendant waiting for Benjamin in the hotel.
- Benjamin was impressed by the quality of the hotel.

Exercise 2

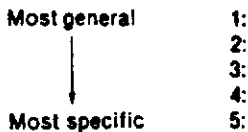
Specific aim: To train the students to discriminate between general and specific statements.

Skills involved: Distinguishing the main idea from supporting details.

Why? Training the students to distinguish between generalizations and specific statements will often help them to find the main idea of a passage more quickly.

Look at the following statements and classify them according to their degree of generality.

- Cats are extremely intelligent animals.
- Siamese cats are believed to be more intelligent than others.
- My neighbour's Siamese cat is exceptionally intelligent.
- Some Siamese cats are just as intelligent as dogs.
- My neighbour's Siamese cat can do all kind of tricks.



Appendix*

Exercise 1

- Specific aim:** To train the students to find out the main idea of a passage.
- Skills involved:** Distinguishing the main idea from supporting details.
- Why?** When the main idea of a paragraph is not actually stated, that is to say when there is no such thing as a topic sentence, the students may find it more difficult to decide what the general meaning of that paragraph is. It is therefore necessary to train them to find out the main ideas in passages of that type.

The first agent Leamas lost was a girl. She was only a small link in the network; she was used for courier jobs. They shot her dead in the street as she left a West Berlin cinema. The police never found the murderer and Leamas was at first inclined to write the incident off as unconnected with her work. A month later a railway porter in Dresden, a discarded agent from Peter Guillam's network, was found dead and mutilated beside a railway track. Leamas knew it wasn't coincidence any longer. Soon after that two members of another network under Leamas' control were arrested and summarily sentenced to death. So it went on: remorseless and unnerving.

(From J. Le Carré: *The Spy Who Came In From The Cold* Pan Books, 1964))

The main idea of this passage is that

- the police couldn't stop the murders of Leamas' men.
- Leamas couldn't understand why so many people were killed.
- Leamas knew someone was killing his agents.
- the murders of Leamas' agents were savage and cruel.

The Hotel Taft was on a hill in one of the better sections of town. A wide street curved up past large expensive homes until it neared the top of the hill, then there was an archway over the street with a sign on the archway reading Taft Hotel and as it passed under the archway the street turned into the entranceway of the hotel. Benjamin drove slowly under the archway,

* Source: Françoise Grellet (1981)

reading strategies but also with their application for the enhancement of reading activities. Furthermore, the teacher can encourage and assist students in applying reading strategies to an extensive range of reading materials so that the strategies transfer to new activities and are used by the readers independently of the teacher's support.

We may conclude by saying that the key to success in instruction and reading programs is resorting to application of appropriate reading strategies and creating an awareness with respect to metacognitive processes involved in the task of reading.*

* For samples of reading strategies refer to Appendix.

the act of comprehending is essentially meaning--driven, holistic, top-down behaviour that is highly selective in the features it incorporates.

4-Conclusion

Poor foreign language reading comprehension is not totally due to insufficient linguistic knowledge but, to some extent, comprehension failures can be attributed to lack of knowledge about metacognitive reading strategies. It seems reasonable for the foreign language reading pedagogy to benefit from the inclusion of explicit, comprehension-fostering metacognitive strategy training and employment of various pedagogic techniques for consciousness-raising concerning appropriate reading strategies. The principal mechanism by which greater learning efficiency materializes with reading strategies is the active mental processes in which students engage during reading, making them capable of capitalizing on available instruction more than less active readers unfamiliar with the reading strategies. Classroom instruction has the potential to affect a bulk of skills to which the strategies can be applied. In this view, teachers can create circumstances in which readers become acquainted not only with the appropriate

In current teaching programs what has been taken for instruction in reading is usually based on discrete-point approach in teaching, i.e. dealing with grammar and vocabulary items. But if the teacher wants to improve the reading ability, he must assist the students in ways that will enable them to improve the communicative processes they go through to arrive at a global comprehension of the reading text.

Viewing reading as a communicative process rather than as a **language** learning process leads to several important conclusions. Students do not need to know all the vocabulary and grammar to comprehend a major portion of the text and to recreate the author's meaning. They can learn to read at a much higher level of proficiency than in the past when the preoccupation with grammar deprived them of the opportunity to read for meaning. They can learn reading strategies that enable them to read at a much higher levels of proficiency (Chastain, 1988:224).

Generally speaking, proficient and skilled learners do not focus on single words and sentences used in the text; instead, the approach they usually adopt is extracting a global understanding of the text and then working toward comprehension of the details dealt with in the text. Based on the results of research studies, Byrnes (1985:50) concludes that

relate new information with information already stated. They are able to notice inconsistencies in a text and employ strategies to make these inconsistencies understandable. (Block, 1986:465).

The researches conducted on metacognitive processes involved in the task of reading convincingly demonstrate the usefulness of developing students' awareness of the strategies they currently use, and of consciously trying to get them to use new strategies. Thompson et al. (1993:139) verify the necessity of equipping the learners with a metacognitive awareness of the reading strategies stating that

as a result of a deficit or developmental delay in metacognition, some readers fail to reach the threshold level of control processing ability required to perform the low level metalinguistic operations necessary for developing basic reading skills. Consequently, they will not be able to derive maximum benefit from reading instruction and will be prevented from taking advantage of the reciprocally facilitating relationships between reading achievement and other aspects of development (such as growth in vocabulary and syntactic knowledge), which facilitate growth in reading.

individual learning tasks and entail direct manipulation or transformation of the learning materials. Students without metacognitive approaches are essentially learners without direction or opportunity to review their progress, accomplishments, and future learning directions.

According to Brown(1987:95), teachers can benefit from an understanding of what makes learners successful and unsuccessful, and establish in the classroom a milieu for the realization of successful strategies. Teachers cannot always expect instant success in that effort. Nevertheless, our efforts to teach students some "technical know-how about how to tackle a language" are well advised.

It is worth noting that good readers are more able to monitor their comprehension than poor readers are, that they are more aware of the strategies they use than are poor readers, and that they use strategies more flexibly. Specifically, good readers adjust their strategies to the type of text they are reading and to the purpose for which they are reading. They distinguish between important information and details as they read and are able to use clues in the text to anticipate information or

product of reading, is required.

As mentioned before, reading is "a kind of metacognitive activity" (Brown, et al., 1984:49) which involves planning, thinking about the reading process, monitoring of comprehension, evaluating, and in short, ways of getting at meaning. The term metacognition refers to one's understanding of any cognitive process. Metacognition in the context of reading is usually understood to consist of two types of cognition: first, one's knowledge of strategies for learning from texts, and second, the control readers have of their own actions while reading for different purposes. Successful readers monitor their reading and the state of their learning; they plan strategies, adjust their efforts appropriately, and evaluate the success of their ongoing efforts to understand. In an attempt to formulate metacognitive strategies in an information-processing, theoretical model, O'Malley et al., (1985:560) hold that

metacognitive strategies involve thinking about the learning process, planning for learning, monitoring of comprehension or production while it is taking place, and self-evaluation of learning after the language activity is completed. Cognitive strategies are more directly related to

reading on the part of the learners. It is the anxious reader who worries about not knowing the words. Therefore, one of the first things we can do is to show the students that we, too, do not know all the words, but that we can nonetheless read pretty well for our purposes most of the time, and that looking up words is the last resort of the successful reader, since good reading entails being prepared to tolerate uncertainty until the text offers us further clues (Wallace, 1988:135).

3-Reading as a metacognitive and communicative process

The core of reading comprehension subsumes delving into the thoughts which are rushing through the minds of readers, struggles for deciphering meaning, mental processes and associations which are unobservable to the researchers. Viewing reading as a kind of problem-solving activity, language teachers hold that knowledge of these unobservable, hidden and internal processes is of prime significance, since the more knowledgeable and more aware they are about how the readers solve the problems they encounter while reading, the more likely they are to teach efficiently. For designing effective instructional programs, knowledge about the process, not just the

10-React to the text: the reader reacts emotionally to information in the text.

Local strategies deal with attempts to understand specific linguistic units.

11-Paraphrase:the reader rephrases content using different words,but with the same sense. This strategy is used to aid understanding, to consolidate ideas, or to introduce a reaction.This strategy is generally used to prepare a simplified version of the text under question.

12-Reread:the reader rereads a portion of the text either aloud or silently.The use of this strategy may give the reader time to reflect on the content.

13-Solve vocabulary problem: the reader uses context, a synonym,or some other **word**-solving behaviour to understand a particular word.

It is worth mentioning that resorting to reading strategies reduces the anxiety of the readers and causes them to be more open to the input and reading materials. In other words, the use of reading strategies is more likely to bring about a sense of self-confidence which is conducive to success in

5-Interpret the text:the reader makes an inference,draws a conclusion,or forms a hypothesis about the content.

6-Use general knowledge and associations: the reader uses his knowledge and experience
(a) to explain,extend, and clarify content;
(b) to evaluate the veracity of content;and
(c) to react to content.

7-Comment on behaviour or process: the reader describes the strategies used, indicates awareness of the components of the process,or expresses a sense of accomplishment or frustration.

8-Monitor comprehension:the reader assesses his or her degree of understanding of the text.

9-Correct behaviour:the reader notices that an assumption,interpretation,or paraphrase is incorrect and changes that statement. This is a combination of the strategies of integration and monitoring,since the reader must both connect new information with old and evaluate understanding.Here the reader acts as an editor,which is an entirely different function.

evaluate their guesses. By contrast, unsuccessful readers tend to: (1) lose the meaning of sentences as soon as they decode them; (2) read word-by-word or in short phrases; (3) rarely skip words; (4) turn to the glossary for the meaning of new words; (5) have a poor self-concept as a reader (Alderson, 1984: 233-245).

According to Block (1986: 472), strategies are categorized into two levels: general comprehension and local linguistic strategies. General strategies include comprehension-gathering and comprehension-monitoring strategies. Each strategy type is listed below and followed by a short description:

1-Anticipate content: the reader predicts what content will occur in succeeding portions of text.

2-Recognize text structure: the reader distinguishes between main points and supporting details or discusses the purpose of information.

3-Integrate information: the reader connects new information with previously stated content.

4-Question information in the text: the reader questions the significance or veracity of content.

they relate to a reader's attempt to make sense of a text, to keep the meaning of the text in mind whilst solving a particular lexical problem, checking to see if his guess fits into the context, evaluating the sense of his hypotheses. Other strategies might be termed paralinguistic, in that they involve relating the verbal information to accompanying visuals, table, etc., using punctuation and orthographic clues as cues for meaning, and typographic devices like titling and sub-headings. Generally speaking, reading strategies used by successful and unsuccessful readers are as follows: successful readers tend to: (1) keep the meaning of the passage in mind; (2) read in broad phrases; (3) skip nonessential words; (4) guess from the context the meaning of unknown words; (5) have a good self-concept as a reader; (6) identify the grammatical category of words; (7) demonstrate sensitivity to a different word order in the foreign language; (8) examine illustrations; (9) read the title and make inferences from it; (10) use orthographic information (e.g., capitalization and italicization); (11) use the glossary as a last resort; (12) look up words in relevant sources correctly; (13) continue if unsuccessful at decoding a word or phrase; (14) recognize cognates; (15) use their knowledge of the world; (16) try out a proposed solution to a certain problem; (17)

of more independent vocabulary comprehension strategies (Celce-Murcia, 1979:147-148).

Readers often need assistance for monitoring their own comprehension, but classroom reading instruction is usually limited to activities that precede or follow the reading of texts (e.g. introduction of new vocabulary and discussion of a story). Teachers rarely help students while students are in the process of constructing meaning. As an example of such help, a teacher might: (1) assign the first paragraph of a story for silent reading; (2) ask several student volunteers to identify words which were new to them and to describe their strategies of guessing about the intended meaning with these words; (3) discuss the identified strategies with the entire class. This sequence—silent reading, disclosure and discussion—can be used with several paragraphs (Alderson, 1984: 244).

In order to create a sense of order in the somewhat ad hoc appearance of the strategies, a categorization of strategies might be useful, though the categories of strategies vary from study to study. They maybe classified into several types: narrowly linguistic, as in identifying the form class of words, recognizing cognates, or chunking strings into phrases. Others are broadly semantic, in that

readers depend on memorizing and rote learning, failing to distinguish major from supporting details or new information from old. Consequently, a surface approach to reading results in poor comprehension, while a deep approach makes understanding the author's message more likely.

It is important to encourage students to use what they already know about the passage to help them determine the meaning of unknown words. Concurrent discussion and practice in determining the meaning of words and structures from the context will be vital in encouraging students to be more self-reliant. Also, when students ask for definitions of words in context, the instructor should encourage students to try to answer the question themselves by returning to the context. Sometimes you need to know the particular meaning of the word(s) in order to understand the contextual meaning. The writer may intentionally be imprecise in what he is saying; thus the reader will have to ensure which meaning of the polysemous word is intended by the writer. The problem is often one of persuading students to be content with a general idea instead of insisting on a precise definition. Patience and persistence are required on the part of the instructor in fostering student acquisition

struction in how to read efficiently improves the quality of this process. Therefore, through strategy instruction teachers can help their students recognize the power of using reading strategies for making reading quicker, easier, and more effective. Teachers need to know the appropriate uses of each strategy. Teachers can weave strategy instruction into regular classroom events in a natural, comfortable, but explicit way (Rebecca L. Oxford, 1996:39).

Most of the incompetent readers have had, little if any, instruction in the task of deciding which ideas in a selection should be retained for a given purpose. In addition, they havenot been introduced to those tools by means of which they could clinch ideas, and they have been given little instruction in the use of economical means of reading. To support the effectiveness of reading strategies on reading comprehension, Abraham and Vann(1996:74) assert that readers who are equipped with a foreknowledge on effective reading strategies can process and interact with the text at a great depth. Learners taking a "deep approach" to a reading task focus on "what is signified" (i.e., the author's argument) and learners taking "a surface approach" to the task focus on the signs.(i.e., the text itself and discrete elements such as vocabulary). "Surface"

- 4-monitoring ongoing activities to determine whether comprehension is occurring;
- 5-engaging in review and self-interrogation to determine whether goals are being achieved;
- 6-taking corrective action when failures in comprehension are detected;and
- 7-recovering from disruptions and distractions--and many more deliberate, planful activities that render reading an efficient information-gathering activity.

As mentioned before, reading strategies constitute the steps or actions selected by the readers for improving the potential of reading ability as well as facilitating the retention and retrieval of what is read. The ostensible objective of reading strategies is to assist the readers in enhancing their knowledge in target language reading. In other words, reading strategies include any efforts by the reader to compensate for some gaps which might arise in the process of reading and to pave the way for the better understanding and effective absorption of the text. Not only has it proven effective to have readers receive specific prompts as to how to deal with the task of reading, but it has also been seen that in-

to new tasks both in the language class and in content areas requiring language skills (O'Malley et al.1985: 557).

It goes without saying that students are in need of help for learning how to read in a foreign language. Unassisted, many readers develop strategies which act as impediments for obtaining meaning efficiently from the reading texts. The instructional methods used in reading classes are focusing mainly on teaching vocabulary and grammar, and the significance of developing and fostering appropriate reading strategies is neglected. It should also be noted that a relatively high level of competence in language is a prerequisite to the ability to use reading strategies as a source of information in reading.

According to Spiro et al.(1980:456),reading strategies incorporate any deliberate planful control of activities that give birth to comprehension.These activities include:

- 1-clarifying the purposes of reading, that is, understanding the task demands,both explicit and implicit;
- 2-identifying the aspects of a message that are important;
- 3-allocating attention so that concentration can be focused on the major content area rather than trivia;

learners are able to improve their skills through training in strategies evidenced by more successful learners. The same is true of reading strategies: less competent readers are able to improve their reading skills through training in strategies evidenced by more successful readers (Carrell et al., 1989: 647-648).

Several investigations conducted into reading strategies and their relationships to successful and unsuccessful foreign language reading strongly suggest that good language learners use a variety of strategies to assist them in gaining command over new language skills. Reading strategies are operations or steps used by a reader to facilitate the acquisition, storage, or retrieval of information. The reading strategies of good readers, once identified and successfully taught to less competent readers, could have considerable potential for enhancing the development of foreign language skills. It seems true to say that reading strategies, at least part of them, are subject to the personality the language learners have. Therefore, it sounds too optimistic to assume that a certain strategy applied successfully by an L2 reader will yield the same result at the hand of another L2 reader. Foreign language teachers can play an active and valuable role by teaching students how to apply reading strategies to varied activities and how to extend the strategies

et al., 1974:181). Alderson and Urquhart (1984:4) express their acquiescence concerning the necessity of having prior knowledge on reading strategies to the effect that

if language is the cause of difficulty in reading the foreign language, then perhaps reading texts need to encourage the use of appropriate reading strategies. If, however, the cause of poor reading in the foreign language is poor reading in the first language, then presumably the teaching of foreign language reading should include instruction in appropriate reading strategies. Thus learners would be encouraged to adopt successful reading strategies, and to become flexible in their approach to text.

2-Reading Strategies

The current researches in foreign language reading have begun to focus on, among other things, readers' strategies. Reading strategies are of interest for what they reveal about the way readers manage their interactions with written text, and how these strategies are related to reading comprehension. Strategy research suggests that less competent

the role of linguistic knowledge in reading comprehension, but the role of metalinguistic factors in the process of reading is undeniable, too. There is research evidence (Ulijn et al., 1976:499) that under normal conditions, when the main purpose of the reading task is seeking information, reading comprehension is little dependent on a syntactic analysis of the text's sentences and that reading comprehension is possible without necessarily mastering the contrasting parts of the foreign language's syntax. Usually, the reader's conceptual knowledge will compensate for the lack of knowledge about linguistic contrasts. Therefore, an attempt is made to depict the facilitative role of some metalinguistic factors, namely reading strategies, in the process of reading in a foreign language.

We cannot expect learners simply to read by mere exposure. It is true that learning is an individual matter, that what is learnt is not necessarily what is taught, that practice improves, even if it does not make perfect. But it is the business of the language teacher to set up conditions which are most favourable for learning--this is essentially what teaching means--and as for as reading is concerned this means that he must devise ways of drawing the learner's attention to how language is used (Allen

the information included in the text. Therefore, the background knowledge of the readers plays a very significant role in the process of reading.

It is an established fact among language teaching experts that reading and comprehending foreign language texts can be facilitated through giving directionality and orientation to the readers' perceptions and ideas with respect to the content of the texts involved. It has been repeatedly observed that students of scientific courses who can understand an English text about their field of study easily, face a lot of difficulties in understanding a relatively simple text about other subjects in English. This is indicative of the fact that while reading a text about their field of study, they use their relevant background information and previous knowledge as well.

The failure of a large portion of the class to comprehend a specific reading text can be, to some extent, ascribed to the teacher's failures in preparing the students in class and paving the way for their efficient comprehension. It seems logical to claim that reading and comprehending foreign language materials can be improved, provided that language teachers adopt a facilitative approach in fostering efficient reading skills of their students. Of course, nobody can deny

F.Farrokhi(M.A.)*

Reading Strategies and Learning Outcomes

1-Introduction

There is a consensus among language specialists that reading in a foreign language and obtaining the required information embedded in the text is one of the significant objectives sought in a foreign language curriculum. Nevertheless, reading and comprehending foreign language texts is, in some cases, hindered and the expected outcome is not gained, mainly due to the fact that reading comprehension is a process taking place through an interaction between the reader and the text. Furthermore, researchers have shown that reading is only partially visual and that the amount of information provided by the reader is more than

*Department of English, University of Tabriz