



# Reading Process



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# Pre questions




- How many skills are there in learning a language?
- What is the interaction among these skills?
- Can you categorize these skills under any titles?
- How can you define the skill of reading?
- What is the interaction of reading with the other language skills?
- Why do you read?
- What is the aim of reading?
- How do you make sense of what you read?
- How do you remember the information presented in a text?

# Content

- Definition
- Types of meaning
- Schema theory
- Types of knowledge
- Steps in reading
- Reasons of reading
- Types of texts
- Reading gears
- Memory and reading
- Extensive – intensive reading
- Subskills of reading





**What is the most  
important skill in FL  
learning?**

# Reading process

- Reading was the most essential language skill in language classes .
- Difficulties in travelling ; EFL learners rarely had the chance to speak English in their daily lives.
- No emphasis on oral communication skills.
- Access to written sources functioned as such learners' basic skill for many years.
- Reading:
  - a passive process ,
  - an active one later on, and
  - recently an interactive one.



# Single sentence definitions

- The process of reading is complex.
- Single sentence definitions cannot describe its full accounts.

# Reading as practice, product, or process

- Reading: *practice, product* or *process* with reference to the field of study (Wallace, 2001).
- **Practice:**
  - regards reading as part of language behaviour.
  - refuses to pay attention to reading strategies.
  - taken into consideration by anthropologists and social psychologists .
  - aim: studying daily life reading without dealing with education.
- **Product:**
  - the result of reading process.
  - interested in the structure and the message of the text.
- **Process:**
  - detailed examination of readers.
  - reveal the reading strategies to achieve meaning.

# Process and operation

- **Process** : “a system of operations in the production of something” (Chastain, 1988, p. 222).
- **Operation:**
  - indicates the activities involved in reading.
  - help readers produce the language (comprehend the text).
- **Writer’s intended meaning:** achieved by the activation of background and linguistic knowledge in readers’ minds which enables them to recreate the meaning.
- Next, exceed the boundaries of the text by interpreting new information derived from the text.
- **An opposed discussions:** reading both as process and product by Badrawi (1992).



# Single-sentence definitions

- “[T]he process of getting meaning from written language” (Fry, 1977, p. 4)
- Readers draw information from the printed page and combine it with the information and expectations that they already have (Grabe & Stoller, 2001).
- “[T]he ability to draw meaning from the printed page and interpret this information appropriately” (Grabe & Stoller, 2002, p. 9).
- The inadequacies of single-sentence definition due to four important reasons.

# Grabe and Stoller (2002, pp. 9-10)

- First, it does not convey the idea that there are a number of ways to engage in reading. A reader has several possible purposes for reading, and each purpose emphasises a somewhat different combination of skills and strategies.
- Second, it does not emphasise the many criteria that define the nature of fluent reading abilities; it does not reveal the many skills, processes and knowledge bases that act in combination, and often in parallel, to create the overall reading comprehension abilities that we commonly think of as reading.
- Third, it does not explain how reading is carried out as a cognitive process that operates under intense time constraints; yet, these very rapid time-processing constraints are essential to understanding how reading comprehension works for the fluent reader.
- Fourth, it does not highlight how the ability to draw meaning from a text and interpret this meaning varies in line with the second language (L2) proficiency of the reader.

# Linguistic and Conceptual Interaction

- Reading process involves different tasks employed in human mind.
- To understand it, visualize the interaction between the author of the text and its reader.
- This interaction originates in two levels (McKay, 1986, p. 192):
  - **Linguistic:** Readers' interaction with the text to decode its language.
  - **Conceptual:** The comprehension of the ideas presented in the text.
  - Interaction also between these two levels.

# Literal and Implied Meaning

- Reading requires achieving either *literal* or *implied* meaning.
- Not possible to interpret all language properly with reference to its literal and surface structure (Brown, 2001).
- Requires some specific demands from the reader.
- Implied meaning derives from processing pragmatic information.

**Do people get  
exactly  
the same message  
when they read  
the same text?**

# Schema Theory

- Reading exists in the process of idea transfer between minds and there might be comprehension problems due to the author or the readers of the text (Fry, 1977).
- The author might be responsible for comprehension problems in case of ill-formed ideas.
- The readers might be responsible for comprehension problems if they are experiencing difficulties in interpreting the ideas in the text due to their different thinking styles from the author.
- Fry's ideas are related with Bartlett's (1932) Schema Theory.

# Goodman's definition of reading

- To understand what kind of knowledge may cause such a mismatch, examine Goodman's (1988) definition of reading.
  - A psycholinguistic process.
  - Starts with the writer's encoding of linguistic surface representation.
  - Only at the last step is the reader able to construct meaning intended by the writer.

# Three Types of Information

- Whether productive or receptive, there are three kinds of information in any language skill.
- Reading process needs to account for this information.
- **The first:** the distinction between spoken and written languages in terms of continuum.
- **The second:** refers to the visual input in the process of reading where it is necessary for readers to adapt themselves a left-to-right, right-to-left, top-to-bottom or other characteristics of written language.
- **The third:** highlights the interaction between memory and the process of reading in which it is essential to combine existing and new information.



# Six Types of Knowledge

- Six types of knowledge assist readers to achieve the meaning (Hedge, 2000).
- *Syntactic* and *morphological knowledge*: related with the knowledge of English language.
- *General world knowledge*, *sociocultural knowledge*, *topic knowledge*, and *genre knowledge*: schematic knowledge.
- Such knowledge assists readers to constitute the dialogue with the text or the author.

# Grabe's Six Steps

- Reading is a complex process (Goodman, 1988; Nassaji, 2003).
- The essential six steps to extract the intended meaning from a text (Grabe, 2003).
  - starts with the identification of the words powerfully.
  - a broad recognition of vocabulary.
  - readers comprehend by processing words and sentences.
  - associate strategic processes.
  - readers interpret reading with reference to their background knowledge.
  - readers evaluate the text by considering their aims in reading it.



# Why do people read?

# Purposes of reading

- **Reading:** the most considerable academic language skill (Carrell, 1988; Grabe & Stoller, 2001).
- “Learning to read is foundation for literacy and a gateway to education” (Paris, Wixson & Palincsar, 1986, p. 91).
- Compare with listening.
- The possibility of transmitting the ideas without a face-to-face interaction even to overseas and even after centuries (Fry, 1977).
- Practising oral skills with native speakers is not possible for many EFL learners (Rivers, 1981).
- The opportunity of finding a publication in TL effortlessly.


# Reasons of Reading

- Two reasons of reading (Richards & Renendya, 2002):
  - **First reason:** FL learners' most essential aim is fostering reading comprehension.
  - **Second reason:** several pedagogical purposes served by written texts help reading receive this specific attention.
- Exposure to a great amount of TL through reading:
  - Results in overall proficiency in the TL (Anderson, 1999).
- This serves to realise the goals of most FL learners.
- The most important skill to master (Anderson, 1999).



# Pleasure Hypothesis (Krashen, 2004, p. 28)

- “If an activity promotes language acquisition, it is enjoyable. But enjoyment does not guarantee language acquisition”.
- Reading is an enjoyable activity which results in development in the TL.
- Learning is a matter of input; not output.
- Comes from comprehension; not production.
- Despite its popularity, reading is the most troublesome way of gathering information for young learners (Quintrell, 1997).



**Do you ever read the  
same text  
more than once?**

# Reading the same text several times

- The main reason to read; simply to receive information.
- However, consider people who read the same story for several times (Noda, 2003).
- The reason; more than gathering information.
- Each time, we integrate the story with our experiences.
- Experiences change, then our interpretation of the text in different times can be different.
- **Social dialog:** readers interact with the text individually by taking their background knowledge into consideration (Mori, 1995).
- “Texts do not ‘contain’ meaning; rather they ‘have potential for’ meaning” (Wallace, 1992, p. 39).



# Rivers and Temperly (1978)

- **Reasons of reading:**
  - firstly, gathering information or fulfilling curiosity;
  - secondly, receiving instructions for executing some duties;
  - thirdly, taking part in a game;
  - fourthly, corresponding either in a formal or an informal style;
  - fifthly, getting information about when and where an activity is taking place;
  - sixthly, learning what is happening; and
  - seventhly, just for pleasure.
- Although the first and sixth items overlap, their attempt deserves appreciation since they account for several different real life reading situations.

# Different types of texts

- Differences between real life and classroom reading.
- Possibility of turning any real life text to reading material.
- **Authentic texts:** no difference between the original text and the one used in the class (Simenson, 1987).
- **Pedagogic texts:** particularly developed to explore the language.
- **Adapted texts:** real life texts which are adapted to control specific functions of the TL.
- For pedagogic and adapted reading materials, care needs to be given since it is quite common to encounter unnatural samples of the TL (Hedge, 2000).
- Then, protect the natural verbose style of authentic texts in simplification (Brown, 2001).

# Harmer's reasons and the notion of flow

- Harmer's two main reasons for reading:
  - **Instrumental:** to achieve some clear aim
  - **Pleasurable:** just for pleasure (also called *recreational reading* (Kottmeyer, 1947)).
- **Flow:** the state human beings arrive in during the deep but effortless activities (Csikszentmihalyi, 1991).
- When flow appears, there is a move from the real-life into the activity which may for example result in, forgetting the troubles in daily life while reading an interesting book.
- Then, reading is “perhaps the most often mentioned flow activity” (p. 117).
- Selecting interesting texts is essential (Chastain, 1988; Williams, 1986) either in instrumental or pleasurable reading.

# 4 different types of reading (Wallace, 1992)

- *“An adult having a sight test at an optician’s and asked to read a list of words”:*
  - reading implies simply identifying the words.
- *“A child in class is shown a flash card with the word ‘here’ on it by the teacher”:*
  - reading is associated with decoding the text.
- *“An Islamic religious leader asks a congregation of boys to read aloud the Koran”:*
  - ‘recitation’;
  - readers decode the text with reference to some features on the page;
  - however, does not guarantee recognizing the same features in other unfamiliar contexts.
- *“The owner of a new computer asks an experienced friend about the instructions in the manual”:*
  - interpreting meaning from the text.
- The first three do not require extracting meaning from the text.
- Achieving meaning is essential in the last one.

# Basic steps in reading process (Grabe & Stoller, 2002)

- Purposes for reading: readers' purposes may differ, but each reader should have at least one purpose.
- Definitional processes involved in reading: characteristics of reading that account for comprehension.
- Processing components of reading:
  - *lower-level process*: deals with components such as *working memory activation*.
  - *higher-level process*: deals with components such as *background knowledge use*.
- Models of reading: *metaphorical* and *specific* models.
- Any process on its own is able to account for fluent reading which appears as a result of their combination altogether.

# Background knowledge

## (also *schema* - plural *schemata*)

- Enables readers to make predictions for more successful interactions with the text.
- Plays an essential role in that interpretation as successful interpretation depends to a large extent on shared schemata (Alderson, 2000).
- Readers recreate the writer's intended meaning by activating their background and linguistic knowledge (Chastain, 1988).
- This enables them to go beyond the text with the help of a variety of clues; therefore, they are able to see beyond the literal meaning of the words (Harmer, 2001).

# 4 types of meaning

- Even a single sentence may have at least four kinds of meaning (Nuttall, 1996, p. 21):
- **Conceptual:** “a word can have on its own”,
- **Propositional:** “a sentence can have on its own”,
- **Contextual:** “a sentence can have only when in a context”, and
- **Pragmatic:** “a sentence has only as part of the interaction between writer and reader”.
- To comprehend texts, readers need to achieve either *literal* or *implied* meaning.
- **Implied meaning:** derived from processing pragmatic information (Brown, 2001).

# Three different ways of examining texts

- Consider texts rather than simple sentences:
- Three different ways on their examination (Wallace, 1992, p. 11):
  - *Formal features*: refers to grammatical functions that connect sentences.
  - *Propositional meaning*: refers to the connection of ideas in a text.
  - *Communicative function*: refers to the interpretation of the text both partly and as a whole.



# Carver's gears:

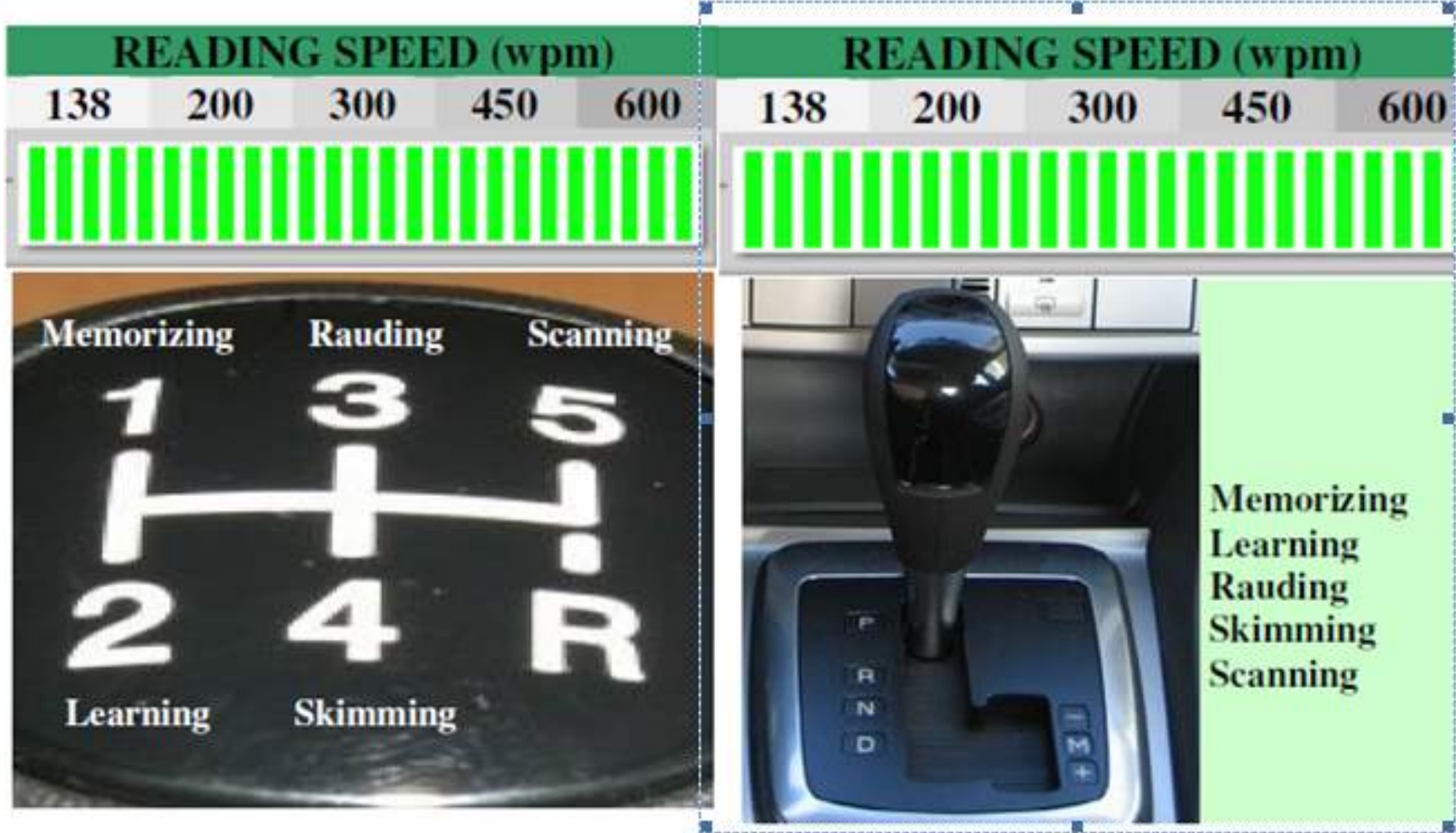
(Razi, 2010, p. 22 based on Carver 1990, 1997)

Reading gears	Reading process	Processing components	Target wpm
Gear 5	Scanning	Lexical assessing	600
Gear 4	Skimming	Semantic encoding	450
Gear 3	Rauding	Sentence integrating	300
Gear 2	Learning	Idea remembering	200
Gear 1	Memorizing	Fact rehearsing	138

- Five basic processes involved in reading.
- **Rauding**: the most typical adult type of reading with comfortable texts such as magazines.
- In such a natural reading process, readers comprehend at least 75% of the material.
- A 200 wpm reading rate would be a realistic aim in FL reading classes (Anderson, 1999).

# Illustration of Reading Gears

(Razi, 2010, p. 22 based on Carver 1990, 1997)



a manual transmission car

an automatic transmission car

# Information processing

(McLaughlin, 1987)

- *Controlled processes*: appears when readers are unfamiliar with the forthcoming information.
- *Automatic processes*: appears when readers are maintaining in familiar situations which require less mental effort.
- Controlled processing is not a learned response.
- Once learned, it is not easy to alter automatic processing since it occurs quickly.
- Apply information processing to Carver's reading gears:
- controlled readers = manual transmission cars
- automatic readers = automatic transmission cars.
- Controlled readers adjust their gears in accordance with their needs in reading the text.
- As they are conscious, their process is rather slow.
- However, when automaticity develops, unconscious processes emerge allowing automatic adjustment of gears.

# How do we process information in our brain?

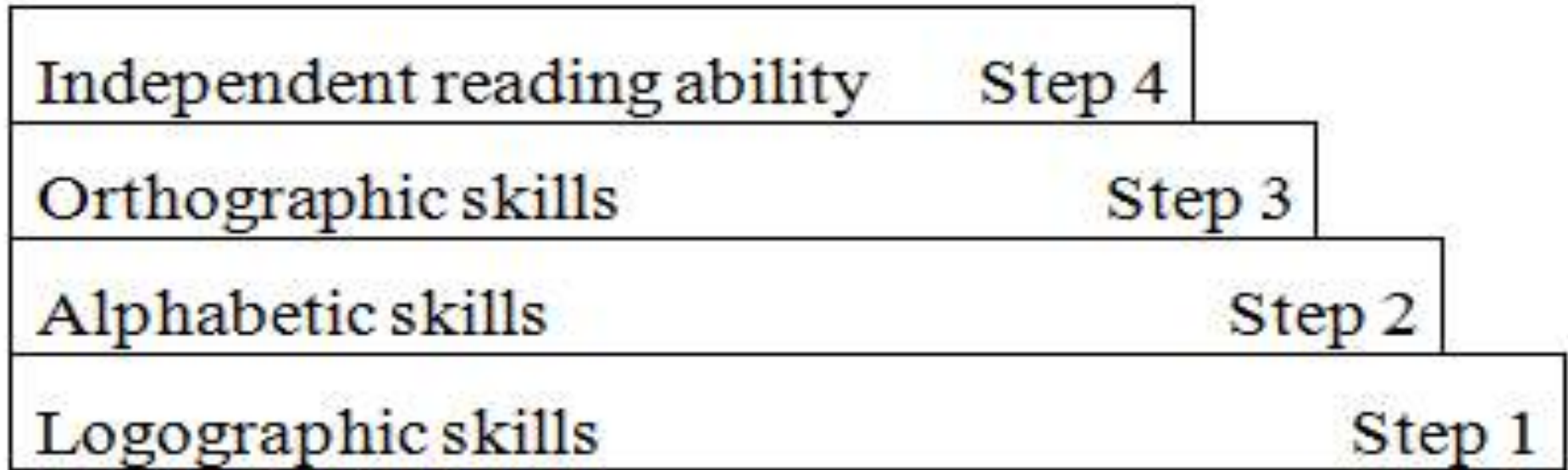


# Reading and memory

- The notions of “attention, short-term memory, long-term memory, and consciousness constitute the core for automaticity” (Nara, 2003, p. 82).
- Sensory registers detect crude information;
- decide whether it is important or not; and
- identify its type.
- Crude information is prone to be lost in case of delinquency.
- If the information in STM is not transmitted to the LTM, it also disappears.

# Four-Stage Acquisition Process

(Razi, 2004, p. 18 based on Frith, 1985)



- In case of a failure in one of these steps, readers cannot jump to the next one.

# Comments on four-stage acquisition process

- Firstly, logographic skills are developed which allow readers to recognize familiar words as a whole.
- Secondly, alphabetic skills are acquired by recognizing individual phonemes with individual letters.
- The acquisition of orthographic skills is materialized thirdly by identifying higher-level clusters of letters.
- Opler and Gjerlow (1999) refer to stage four and remark that it is not achieved by all readers.
- Reading appears as a distinctive skill different from oral language in this stage.

# The two-way relationship between memory and reading (Grabe & Stoller, 2002)

- First; various simultaneous processes:
  - recognising words very rapidly,
  - keeping them active in their working memories, and
  - analysing the structure of sentences.
- Then, analysing skills are assembling “the most logical clause-level meanings, building a main-idea model of text comprehension in our heads, monitoring comprehension and so on” (p. 18).
- In case of slow decoding, STMs are overloaded (Binkley, 1981).



# The two-way relationship between memory and reading (Grabe & Stoller, 2002)

- Second, the interaction between readers' activated background knowledge and linguistic information from the text.
- Background knowledge exists in the LTM.
- The interpretation of the text requires both linguistic and background knowledge.
- The significance of converting information from the STM to the LTM.
- Otherwise the information in the STM vanishes in a maximum of twenty-second period (Chastain, 1988).
- Then, such information needs to be processed to make the transfer possible (Pressley & Woloshyn et al., 1995).
- General comprehension takes a long time to master.

# STM and working memory

- To Cook (1991, p. 49):
  - STM: “the memory used for keeping information for periods of time up to a few seconds”
  - Working memory: “the memory system used for holding and manipulating information while various mental tasks are carried out”.
- To Grabe and Stoller (2002, p. 18):
  - *Working memory* and *the STM* are interchangeable.
  - The STM is integrated with the activated information “which involves the active use of cognitive processes such as recognising and storing word information, using syntactic information, connecting pronoun references, building overall text structure, integrating and restructuring information, assessing inferences and adapting reader goals”.

# Chunking

- FL reading has been accused of overstraining the limited capacity of the STM (Kern, 1989).
- **Chunking**: a way of reducing the strain on the STM in which separate pieces of information are grouped into larger units that results in easiness in remembering (Carroll, 1994).
- In the STM, the new information is analysed and then integrated with the existing one (Erten, 1998).
- The duration of information in the STM depends on the way of presenting information as either visual or aural.
- Visual information stays in the STM for two seconds.
- Aural one stays for a longer period up to five seconds.
- The STM
  - limited in its capacity and against time (Miller, 1956) and
  - dynamic (Carroll, 1994).
- Repetition prevents the rapid fade of information as the mind works on various tasks while the STM processes information.

# Reading constitutes of

**two processes** (Grabe & Stoller, 2002, p. 20):

- ***Lower-level processes:***

- deals with more automatic linguistic processes that are more skills-oriented.
- include ‘lexical access’, ‘syntactic parsing’, ‘semantic proposition formation’, and ‘working memory activation’.

- ***Higher-level processes:***

- deals with the processes based on comprehension that make more use of readers’ background knowledge and inferencing skills.
- include ‘text model of comprehension’, ‘situation model of reader interpretation’, ‘background knowledge use and inferencing’, and ‘executive control processes’.

# Classroom reading performance

- **Classroom reading performance:**
  - *Oral reading* and
  - *Silent reading* (Brown, 2001).
    - *Intensive*: constitutes of *linguistic* and *content*
    - *Extensive*: constitutes of *skimming*, *scanning*, and *global*.

# Extensive and intensive reading

- To Rivers (1981) and Scrivener (2005)
  - **Extensive reading:** refers to an overall understanding of a longer piece of text without being concerned about the details.
  - **Intensive reading:** refers to understanding the details in a shorter piece of text.
- To Aebbersold and Field (1997):
  - through **extensive reading** it is possible to read large amounts of own-chosen texts for general comprehension.
  - **intensive reading** requires the assistance of a reading teacher as detailed comprehension is essential.
- To Cross (1999):
  - Tasks such as keeping records and making summaries can be related with extensive reading.
  - Tasks identifying the facts and focusing on form and style are appropriate for intensive reading.

# Extensive and intensive reading (Con't)

- Intensive reading requires four types of understanding (Munby, 1979):
  - the literal comprehension of the text,
  - inferring meaning,
  - awareness of the idea relationship, and
  - relating the text to prior knowledge.
- extensive reading = *free voluntary reading* (Krashen, 2004).

# Characteristics of ideal

## extensive reading (Hedge, 2000, p. 202)

- Reading large quantities of material, whether short stories and novels, newspaper and magazine articles, or professional reading.
- Reading consistently over time on a frequent and regular basis.
- Reading longer texts (more than a few paragraphs in length) of the types listed in the first point above.
- Reading for general meaning, primarily for pleasure, curiosity, or professional interest.
- Reading longer texts during class time but also engaging in individual, independent reading at home, ideally of self-selected material.



# The aim of extensive reading

- Extensive reading aims to develop avid readers.
- Encourage readers to read lengthy texts after school.
- Reading lengthy texts; much easier in comparison to shorter ones (Chastain, 1988).
- To support extensive reading (Hedge, 2000, p. 219):
  - Allocate short interview sessions to discuss the books that they are reading.
    - Such sessions can be conducted also in L1 with beginners.
    - With more proficient readers it is essential to verify the use of English in order to stimulate the amount of exposure to the TL.
  - The reading syndicate: a group of readers introduce the books they are reading which are different from the books that their class-mates read.

# Characteristics of ideal extensive reading programmes (Day & Bamford, 1998, pp. 7-8)

- Students read as much as possible, perhaps in and definitely out of the classroom.
- A variety of materials on a wide range of topics is available so as to encourage reading for different reasons in different ways.
- Students select what they want to read and have the freedom to stop reading material that fails to interest them.
- The purposes of reading are usually related to pleasure, information, and general understanding. These purposes are determined by the nature of the material and the interests of the students.
- Reading is its own reward. There are few or no follow-up exercises after reading.

# Characteristics of ideal extensive reading programmes (Day & Bamford, 1998, pp. 7-8) (Con't)

- Reading materials are well within the linguistic competence of the students in terms of vocabulary and grammar. Dictionaries are rarely used while reading because the constant stopping to look up words makes fluent reading difficult.
- Reading is individual and silent, at the student's own pace, and, outside class, done when and where the student chooses.
- Reading speed is usually faster rather than slower as students read books and other material they find easily understandable.
- Teachers orient students to the goals of the program, explain the methodology, keep track of what each student reads, and guide students in getting the most out of the program.
- The teacher is a role model of a reader for students—an active member of the classroom reading community, demonstrating what it means to be a reader and the rewards of being a reader.

# Reading strategies and extensive and intensive reading

- Extensive reading classes require employing some reading strategies by readers to overcome the problems they encounter during reading.
- Intensive reading may assist extensive reading since readers are able to familiarize themselves with reading strategies under the guidance of a teacher in the classroom.
- Such strategies can become operational only through practice which can be provided by extensive reading.

# Davis' subskills of reading

- Davis proposes nine subskills in 1944.
- by posterior analyses Davis (1968) breaks reading comprehension into eight essential skills as:
  - recalling word meanings,
  - drawing inferences about the meaning of a word from context,
  - finding answers to questions answered explicitly or in paraphrase,
  - weaving together ideas in the content,
  - drawing inferences from the content,
  - recognizing a writer's purpose, attitude, tone and mood,
  - identifying a writer's technique,
  - following the structure of a passage.

# Criticizing Davis' list

- Criticism against Davis' assertions of reading subskills.
  - factor analysis does not yield in persuasive results to distinguish eight subskills from each other (Carroll, 1969, 1971; Spearitt, 1972).
- Munby's (1978) list also has an immense impact.
  - reading subskills = microskills
  - they are not a result of an empirical study where readers are asked comprehension questions on a text as in Davis'.

# Munby's (1978) list

- recognizing the script of a language
- deducing the meaning and use of unfamiliar lexical items
- understanding explicitly stated information
- understanding information when not explicitly stated
- understanding conceptual meaning
- understanding the communicative value of sentences
- understanding relations within the sentence
- understanding relations between parts of text through lexical cohesion devices
- understanding cohesion between parts of a text through grammatical cohesion devices
- interpreting text by going outside it
- recognizing indicators in discourse
- identifying the main point or important information in discourse
- distinguishing the main idea from supporting details
- extracting salient points to summarize (the text, an idea)
- selective extraction of relevant points from a text
- basic reference skills
- skimming
- scanning to locate specifically required information
- transcoding information to diagrammatic display

# 6 Elements of reading (Grabe, 1991)

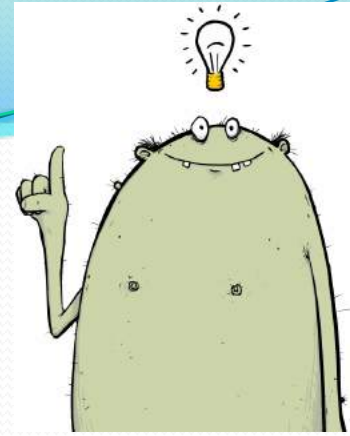
- **Automatic recognition skills:** if readers are unaware of the reading process or if they control the reading process unconsciously by referring to little processing capacity then *automaticity* occurs (LaBerge & Samuels, 1974). As young readers' memory capacity is limited, decoding consumes almost all their cognitive capacity.
- **Vocabulary and structural knowledge:** becoming a fluent reader requires both knowledge of language structure and a large recognition of vocabulary in the TL.
- **Formal discourse structure knowledge:** reading comprehension is in parallel with the organization of the text.



## 6 Elements of reading (Grabe, 1991) (Con't)

- **Content/world background knowledge:** reading comprehension is affected by both background and cultural knowledge relevant to the text-related information.
- **Synthesis and evaluation skills/strategies:** the evaluation of information gained from the text, its comparison with other sources, and the prediction of the forthcoming information in the text all have an impact on comprehension.
- **Metacognitive knowledge and skills monitoring:** metacognition is knowledge about cognition; the self-regulation of cognition is a critical component of skilled reading.

# Conclusion



- Consider the interaction between reading and other skills.
- There are various reasons of reading.
- The interaction between memory and reading is crucial to understand the process of reading.
- Extensive vs. intensive reading.
- In the following chapter, you will study the strategies that you employ in the process of reading.

THE  
END