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**Teaching Reading Skills**

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(وقل اعملوا فسيرى الله عملكم ورسوله والمؤمنين وستردون إلى عالم الغيب والشهادة فينبئكم بما كنتم تعملون)

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- صدق الله العلي العظيم -

Dedication...

 To those who set us on the path of life. To our wonderful parents, who instilled in us a passion of learning from an early age, to whom we owe the credit for where we are, after God.



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# ABSTRACT

This study examines the multifaceted process of teaching and acquiring reading skills in English as a foreign language (EFL), with a focus on vocabulary development, comprehension strategies, and cultural influences. Grounded in theoretical frameworks from prominent scholars (e.g., Grabe, 1991; Nuttall, 1996; Kendeou & Christ, 2016), the research explores the interplay between decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension—the core components of reading proficiency. It investigates effective instructional methods, including explicit strategy training (e.g., predicting, inferring, summarizing) and contextualized vocabulary learning, while critiquing traditional approaches like Phonics and Whole Language.

The study highlights the role of cultural contexts in shaping reading practices, challenging deficit-oriented perceptions of EFL learners and emphasizing enabling strategies for diverse classrooms. Practical recommendations are derived for educators to integrate metacognitive awareness, scaffolded instruction, and authentic texts into curricula. Findings underscore the necessity of addressing both linguistic and cognitive barriers to foster autonomous, proficient readers.

**Keywords**: Reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, EFL instruction, metacognitive strategies, cultural contexts

**CHAPTER ONE**

**1.1 Definition of reading**

**1.2 Definition of reading skills**

**1.3 Reading strategies**

**1.4 The components of reading**

**1.5 Reading Instructions**

# Introduction

Reading is a complex, purposeful, interactive comprehending, and flexible activity that takes considerable time and resources to develop. Reading comprehension is a process of getting meaning from and bringing meaning to text. Theoretical framework, concerning classification of reading skills, criteria for skill ranking and skill transfer, is presented. The balance between skills and language affects the teaching of reading in English for Specific Purpose. Adopting a range of reading styles, strategies and techniques in second/foreign language classroom is necessary for successful interaction with the authentic texts in English for Specific Purpose implying more efficient second language readers. Different techniques for testing reading are also analyzed. Success in reading comprehension task is studied by analyzing effects of the type of the training students have undergone, for how long they have studied English at the faculty, duration of training in reading skills, frequency of testing, and the nature of texts used as a basis for applying reading comprehension tests. (Milena Bojarski Begovic (2010): Reading Skills and Reading Comprehension in English for Specific Purposes)

# 1.1 Definition of reading

Reading is a complex, purposeful, interactive,comprehending, flexible activity that takes considerabletime and resources to develop. Reading is rapid, whichmeans that readers should maintain flow of information ata sufficient rate to make connections and inferences vitalto comprehension. The reader has a purpose for reading,whether it is for entertainment, information, or research.Reading for a purpose provides motivation - an importantaspect of being a good reader. It is interactive activity - the reader makes use of information from his/her backgroundknowledge as well as information from the printed page;reading is also interactive in the sense that many skillswork together simultaneously in the process. Thereadertypically expects to understand what s/he is reading . Reading is flexible, meaning that the reader employs arange of strategies to read efficiently. Finally, readingdevelops gradually; the reader does not become fluentsuddenly, or immediately following a readingdevelopment course decoding processes are important for comprehension andare used by readers in interaction with the more complexprocesses of meaning generation.

However, it is equally clear that readers engage inreading in order to gain information. Reading purpose is acentral concern of English for Specific Purposes (ESP),and purpose resides in the language learner's relationshipto the learning task. The purpose is assumed to becomprehension of the message. Comprehension ininstructional settings is translated into some product,suchas completion of comprehension questions, a writtensummary, or an oral repor. (M. Bojovic, p. 223, July 2008.)

# 1.2 Definition of reading skills

A reading skill is a cognitive ability which a person isable to use when interacting with the written text. In thetaxonomies given in the following paragraph some skillsseem more inclusive than others .

According to the reference , reading skills involve:identifying word meaning, drawing inferences, identifyingwriter’s technique, recognizing mood of passage, findinganswers to questions. Reading skills can also include: recognizing the script of language; deducing the meaning,use of unfamiliar lexical items; understanding explicitlyand non-explicitly stated information, conceptualmeaning, communicative value of sentences, relationswithin the sentences and between parts of text through lexical cohesion devices; recognizing indicators and mainpoint of information in discourse; distinguishing main ideafrom supporting detail; selective extraction of relevantpoints from the text; basic reference skills; skimming,scanning, transcoding information from diagrams/charts .

According to reading skills are as follows: wordmeaning in context, literal comprehension, drawinginferences, interpretation of metaphor, finding main ideas,forming judgments. Reading skills, also involve: automatic recognition skills, vocabulary andstructural knowledge formal discourse structureknowledge, content/world background knowledge,synthesis and evaluation skills/strategies, metacognitive knowledge and skills monitoring.Grabe’s taxonomy uses very general categories, equivalent to knowledge areas. If reading itself is a skill, it must be possible to break this down into different levels of component skills categories. Reference suggests adistinction between “language related” and “reasonrelated” skills. Some attempts have been made to arrangeskills into hierarchies. The taxonomy of Lunzer et al. is so arranged, with the lowest level skills at the top.Munby’s taxonomy was not intended to behierarchically arranged, but it seems that some skills presuppose the learning of other skills. Skills areinterdependent, and they are acquired at different rates andMost of these skills are composed of several processes,of which skimming and scanning are useful first stages for determining whether to read a text or which parts to read carefully. Once a text has been identified as relevant, thenESP readers need to read carefully, extract meaning andconsider the author’s attitude. (C. Nuttall, 1996 . P 282)

# 1.3 Reading strategies

The researchers had found that learning reading strategies is a key element indeveloping student comprehension. However, many teachers lack a solid foundation forteaching these reading comprehension strategies. Therefore, teachers need to beprepared on how to design effective reading comprehension strategies and how to teachthese strategies to their students. Therefore this study aims to study the effective reading strategies in order to improve reading skills in language classes. The study is an actionresearch applied to a number of 15 students in an intermediate level integrated skillscourse. The main question of the study is “Would reading strategies help my students’ reading comprehension studies?”. The result od the study indicate that the students hadan improvement to a great extend have been tutored about the reading strategiesResearch shows good readers are actively involved with the text, and theyare aware ofthe processes they use to understand what they read. Teachers can help improve student comprehension through instruction of reading strategies. Predicting, makingconnections, visualizing, inferring, questioning, and summarizing are strategies shownby research to improve reading comprehension . It is important toteach the strategies by naming the strategy and how it should be used, modellingthrough the think-aloud process, group practice, partner practice, and independent use ofthe strategy .

## 1.1.3 Predicting

First strategy for improving reading comprehension is predicting, which helps thereader set a purpose for their reading. Research has shown that good readers use theirexperiences and knowledge to make predictions and formulate ideas as they read. This strategy also allows for more student interaction, which increasesstudent interest and improves their understanding of the text .

## 1.2.3 Visualizing

Another strategy that the good readers employ when comprehending a text isvisualization . Visualization requires the reader to construct an image ofwhat is read. This image is stored in the raders’s memory as are representation of thereader’s interprtation of the text . Teachers can motivatestudents to visualize settings,characters, and actions in a story and askthem to make drawings or write about the image that come to their minds after visualizing the text .

## 1.3.3 Making Connections

Making connections is another strategy that can be used in the reading process. Bymaking connections, the learners can activate their prior knowledge and connect theideas in the text to their own experiences. Reading becomes meaningful when the readerconnects the ideas in the text to their experiences and beliefs, and the things happeningin the outer world. “TexttoText, Text-to-Self, Text-to-World” is a strategy that helpsstudents make connections. Students can make text-to-self connections throughdrawing, making a chart, or writing. Teachers might ask students if they have ever experienced anything like the events in the text. Students can make text totextconnections through drawing, making a chart, writing, and graphic organizers. These text-to-text connections could be based upon how

characters in the story relate to each other, or how story elements relate between stories

## 1.4.3 Summarizing

The process of summarization requires the reader to determine what is importantwhen reading and to condense the information in the readers own words.During the summarizing process, the students will be able to distinguish the main ideasfrom the supporting ideas.Distinguishing the relatedknowledge from the unrelatedonesis another point in the summarizing process which will help the students’ capacityto improve text comprehension.

Summarizing is a strategy which helps the students toorganize the ideas even in the long reading passages which are usually perceived as threat for the students .

## 1.5.3 Questioning

Readers can use the questioning before, during, and after reading. The questioningprocess requires readers to ask questions of themselves to construct meaning, enhanceunderstanding, find answers, solve problems, find information, and discover newinformation . In this strategy, the students return to the textthroughout the reading process to find the answers to the questions asked by the teacher before, during and after the reading.By this strategy, students practice to distinguishbetween questions that are factual inferred or based on the reader’s prior knowledge. By using the student generated questioning strategy; text segments are integrated andthereby improve reading comprehension .

## 1.6.3 Inferring

Inferring refers to reading between the lines. Students need to use their own knowledge along with information from the text to draw their ownconclusions. Through inferring students will be able to draw conclusions, makepredictions, identify underlying themes, useinformation to create meaning from text,and use pictures to create meaning . Students can be giventechniques to use illustrations, graphs, pictures, dates, related vocabulary and titles from the text to make inferences. (Zimmermann ,

2009, P 21 -23)

# 1.4 The components of reading

Research has identified five components of reading:

* Phonemic awareness
* Decoding
* Fluency
* Vocabulary
* Comprehension

Each of the first four components plays an important role in facilitating comprehension.

## Phonemic awareness

Phonemic awareness is the ability to detect individual speech sounds within words. Phonemic awareness isrequired for developing accurate decoding skills. Some struggling readers have not acquired this ability, sophonemic awareness may need to be directly taught.

## Decoding.

Decoding is a word identification skill that involves using letter-sound correspondences to recognize words inprint. Decoding at higher skill levels also includes using larger word parts--like syllables, prefixes, and suffixes.Adults with weak decoding skills need explicit and systematic phonics instruction.

Sight words are those a reader recognizes automatically and reads rapidly. Some frequently encountered words, especially those that have phonetically irregular spellings, are initially taught to be recognized on sight,to enhance reading speed and fluency. But even if a reader initially identifies a word by decoding, after many exposures the word is stored in memory and can be quickly recognized. In this way all words eventually become "sight words."The alphabetics skills of phonemic awareness and decoding are necessary but not sufficient for readingcomprehension.

## Fluency development

Fluency is vital to comprehension. A fluent reader identifies words rapidly and accurately with little effort, and istherefore able to focus on meaning. A fluent reader also "interprets" while reading to determine appropriate phrasing and expression. This aspect of fluency indicates comprehension of the writer's message. Guided repeated oral reading is a recommended strategy for building fluency in beginning and developing readers.Alphabetics skills are required to develop fluency. Fluency is necessary but not sufficient to ensure readingcomprehension.

## • Vocabulary development

Vocabulary is important to reading comprehension in two ways. The beginning reader uses decoding skills to "translate" print into words that are already in his oral vocabulary. At higher reading levels, vocabulary knowledge is critical for understanding increasingly difficult materials. Learners not only need to learn newwords; they need to deepen their knowledge of words they already know. Vocabulary instruction should involve direct teaching and context-based approaches.Vocabulary is vital to reading comprehension at all levels.

## • Comprehension

Comprehension strategies enable learners to monitor their own understanding as they read and to solve comprehension problems. Direct and explicit instruction is required for new and developing readers.Even accurate, fluent reading does not guarantee comprehension. Specific comprehension strategies mayneed to be taught.

These components should not be seen as sequential. Students don't learn the alphabetics skills and thenbecome fluent and then develop vocabulary and then focus on comprehension. Although the foundational alphabetics skills are a primary focus of beginning instruction, in fact, all the components reinforce each other, and as a result, often develop simultaneously. Teachers should address all the necessary components (atappropriate levels of difficulty) in reading lessons . In addition, the skills should be taught and practiced not only with drills and workbook exercises, but also with meaningful, authentic (real-life) materials, including texts in content areas like science, social studies, literature, and materials related to work and home life.(National Reading Panel. (2000).

# 1.5 Reading Instructions

The debate on the methods of initial reading instruction has probably been the mostintense in the United States, where the positions may also have been the mostentrenched. In our own country,Norway, and generally in Scandinavia, the campshave been less rigidly opposed to each other. To this should be added that theNorwegian spelling conventions,dialect situation and cultural and

educationalcircumstances have affected the characteristicsof the national debate. However,given that the underlying pedagogicalprinciples are similar, we will here accountfor some of the main developments of the debate in the United States. Most commentators tend to refer to two main positions, using somewhatdifferent names for them. Here we will call one of those camps Phonics and theother Whole Language. However, it should be kept in mind what Chall (1967)found after reviewing 85 studies of teaching methods, namely that ‘[i]t was what the teacher did with the method, the materials, and the childrenrather than themethod itself that seemed to make the difference’ (p. 270). This is important notonly because any method will be interpreted and practised differently by differentteachers, but also because the teacher’s personality and theclassroom environmentmay be crucial to the students’ learning outcomes.In Norway, Reading Based on Speech (or LTG) was a

popular method in thefield of initial reading instruction from the 1970s to the 1990s. This method hassome affinities with the Phonics– Whole Language debate but also exhibits certaincharacteristics and underlying explanations that fall outside that debate. In this chapter, we will focus mainly on Phonics versus WholeLanguage,because in ouropinion this best illustrates the fundamental positions and points of disagreement.However, we will begin with some brief information about LTG and a few comments on it.The LTG method was developed in the 1970s by the Swedish primary-schoolteacher Ulrika Leimar (Leimar, 1974). Her starting point was that initial readinginstruction at the time was characterised by an artificial and restricted vocabulary (corresponding rather well to the criticism levelled by the WholeLanguage schoolat the Phonics school in the United States).She wanted to bring the vocabularyused closer to what the children already knew when first starting school – notprimarily include more literary texts. The aim was to integrate meaning andmotivation in the learning of the technical skills required forreading. (D. Eskey, "Conclusion", in Research in Reading English as a Second Language, J.

Devine, P. Carrell, and D. Eskey, Eds. (Washington, DC: TESOL, 1987, pp. 189-192. )

**CHAPTER TWO**

**2.1. Reading Comprehension**

**2.2. Strategies in Reading Comprehension**

**2.3. Cultural Contexts in becoming readers**

**Conclusion**

**Reference**

# Introduction

Educators, researchers, and policy makers have exerted per-sistent efforts over the last 60 years to improve reading perfor-mance among children in the United States (e.g., Alexander & The Disciplined Reading andLearning Research Laboratory, 2012; Common Core State Standards [CCSI] Initiative, 2010; Connor et al., 2014). Nonetheless, 44% of fourth grade and 46% of eighth-grade children failed to meet the standards for reading proficiency on the most recent Nation’s Report Card (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2015). Results for nonmajoritygroups are particularly troubling. For example, Blackchildren in fourth grade performed an average of 26 points lower than their Whitecounterparts, and similar discrepancies were evident for other minority groups. These unacceptable educational disparities betweenexpected performance and actual achievement must be addressed.Proficient reading in fourth grade requires students to make simple inferences, draw conclusions, and make evalu-ations about the texts they read. Proficient reading in eighth grade requires students to make simple inferences, connect parts of the text, and substantiate judgments about text con-tent. Thus, the standards for reading performance reach beyond the fundamental aspects of reading to include the identification and use of meaning in both its explicit and implicit forms. Students who do not meet these standards fail to derive and use the overall meaning of text . (i.e., word read-ing and fluency; Ehri, 2014)

# 2.1.Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is among the most complex human activities. To understand this sentence, for example, one must visually process the words; identify their phonological, orthographic, and semantic representations; and connect the words using rules of syntax to understand the underlying meaning of the sentence (Perfetti & Stafura, 2014). Understanding the underlying meaning of each sentence, however, is not sufficient. One must integrate that meaning across sentences, make use of relevant background knowl-edge, generate inferences, identify the text structure, and take into consideration the authors’ goals and motives (Graesser, 2015). The end product is a mental representation that reflects the overall meaning of the text, what has been termed as the situation model (Kintsch & van Dijk, 1978). For all of these processes to be successful, many interacting factors are playing a role, such as reader characteristics, text properties, and the demands of the task at hand (Kintsch, 1998; Snow, 2002). This basic level of comprehension is necessary (but not sufficient) for deep learning and develop-ing other 21st century skills (Goldman & Pellegrino, 2015; Graesser, 2015).The inherent complexity of reading comprehension demands a theory of reading to describe the cognitive and linguisticprocesses involved, and to make precise, testable predictions. At the same time, this inherent complexity limits our ability to build such a theory with the precision required (Perfetti & Stafura, 2014). As a result, reading and discourse researchers have proposed a number of theoretical models and frameworks that focus on selected components and pro-esses of reading comprehension.One set of models focuses on the identification of component skills, linguistic and cognitive, that explain reading com- prehension performance. In this context, several component skills predict reading comprehension, including word decod-ing (Ehri, 2014), reading fluency (Fuchs, Fuchs, Hosp, & Jenkins, 2001), vocabulary knowledge (Quinn, Wagner, Petscher, & Lopez, 2015), language comprehension (Kendeou, van den Broek, White, & Lynch, 2009; Storch & Whitehurst, 2002), prior knowledge (Kintsch, 1988), comprehension monitoring (Cain, Oakhill, Barnes, & Bryant, 2001), and working memory (Sesma, Mahone, Levine, Eason, & Cutting, 2009). Among the component models proposed, the Simple View of Reading (SVR; Hoover & Gough, 1990), which portrays reading comprehension as the product of decoding and language comprehension, has been extremely influential. In the context of the SVR, decoding includes pro-cesses needed to decipher written code, such as phonological processing, orthographic processing, and word recognition, whereas language comprehension includes processes needed to build a coherent mental representation, such as vocabulary and inference making. The SVR, unlike other more complex component models (e.g., the Direct and Inferential Mediation [DIME] model; Cromley & Azevedo, 2007), is not meant to be comprehensive. Rather, it identifies two of the core com-ponents of reading comprehension.A second set of models1 focuses on the identification of various processes concerned primarily with the construction of the mental representation during reading (see McNamara & Magliano, 2009, for a review). Amongthese models, the Construction-Integration model (CI; Kintsch & van Dijk, 1978), which describes reading comprehension as the activation and integration of text information and relevant back-ground knowledge into a coherent mental representation (i.e., a situation model), has been extremely influential for researchers and educators alike. In fact, whether one sub-scribes to the CI model or any other theoretical model or framework, there is consensus that, at its core, reading com-prehension involves the construction of a coherent mental representation of the text in the readers’ memory. The construction of this representation is accomplished via inference making ( Panayiota Kendeou، Theodore J. Christ، 2016 ,P 69.) .

# 2.2. Strategies in Reading Comprehension

Definition of Reading Strategies There are many different views about the definition of reading strategies depending on different scholars that iswhy there is no clear cut definition. According to Garner (1987) defines reading strategies “as generally deliberate, playful activities undertaken by active learners, many times to remedy perceived cognitive failure” (P, 95). Additionally, Barnett (2002) (Tercanlioglu, 2008) has used the term reading strategy to refer to “the cognitive operations that take place when readers approach a text with the purpose to make sense of what they read. In this sense, reading strategies are as the comprehension processes that readers use in order to make sense of what they read” (P, 1-14). So, Reading strategies are effective techniques that are used by EFL learners to success in reading comprehension. On the other hand, we cannot exclude the role of EFL teachers who should be both aware of the use of reading strategies and should teach learners on how to use these different strategies successfully.

## 2.2.1.The Importance of Reading Strategies

In educational system, most of EFL learners face many problems especially in comprehension of written materials when reading. According to them, understanding the meaning of texts can be a great challenge i.e. they able to understand each word and even each sentence; but unfortunately, they fail to achieve the meaning of text as a whole. For that reason, many psychologies and researchers assume that those who always struggle and find reading comprehension as a problematic issue. Because of most of these students lack the reading strategies that may help them to overcome their reading problems.

## 2.2.2. Some of Reading Strategies

In the area of reading strategies studies, many researchers have utilized different types of strategies; these last are more effective, useful and beneficial ones for students which some of them are as follows: predicting, skimming, scanning, inferring, guessing the meaning of new words, self monitoring, and summarizing.

## 2.2.3.Predicting

Magiliano (1993) stated that “prediction strategy involves thinking about what might be coming next in the text. It is applied by effective reader that mean, they used pictures, headings and text as well as personal experience to make predictions before they begin to read”(p: 35-53). So, predicting involves thinking ahead while reading and anticipating information and events in the text. Jessica also viewed that “it is used in reading task, it helps learners to think what will happen based upon the text, the author, and background knowledge in other words it makes students elicit their interest, activate their prior knowledge, or pre-teach vocabulary or concepts that may be difficult” (Jessica, G, 2000 cited in The Ohio University Education, 2014). In this sense, predicting requires learners to use the text to decide what will happen next. Readersconfirm or deny predictions with support from the text (Test Wise Word Assiciation,2006).

## 3.2.4. Skimming

It is used by readers to get “a general idea about the content of printed materials through reading the text quickly i.e. in this strategy, readers will look for something quite specific or get general ideas before putting effort into close reading”( Grellet,1999, P, 2-25). For instance, One does not want to read the whole texts or articles; s/he may use various techniques to skim: (1) Use of quick glance through the pages (2) Notice the titles and headings and subheadings (3) Read the opening sentence and the conclusion carefully (4) Read the first and the last sentence of each paragraph in order to gain the main idea of the main points (As Dinah Mack & Holly Epstein Ojalov, 2009 cited in The article of New York Times,2014).

## 2.2.5. Scanning

According to Grellet (1981), “scanning is a reading technique that requires reader to search for specific information without reading the whole text, through looking at its title, table of content and so on” (pP,5859). It is a strategy you often use when looking for specific information by reading something quickly such as search for key words or ideas. In most cases, you know what you're looking for, so you're concentrating based on finding a particular answer.

## 2.2.6. Inferring

Prezler(2006) said that “inferences are evidence -based guesses i.e. in case of reading; students use their prior knowledge to make inferences about the text” (P, 4). According to Zimmermann (2009) saw that inferences are often referred to as what you “read between the lines” that means the author wants the reader to make the jump to the same conclusion the

author has made. He states also that “Drawing inferences from text is a technique which requires readers to use their prior knowledge (schema) and textual information to draw conclusions, make critical judgments, and form unique interpretations from text” (p23). So, the inferences are the conclusions that a reader draws about the unsaid passage based on what is actually said by the author.

## 2.2.7. Guessing the Meaning of New Words

One of the most difficult problems that make an obstacle for students in the comprehension of reading is unfamiliar/new words. According to Clarck (1980) the best way to solve this problem is “to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words from the context in order to save time and tocontinue reading without interruption or referring to a dictionary” (P, 211-220). The ability to guess meaning from context is a useful skill to practice and try to improve. There are many things that could help students such as: (1) Guess the meaning of the text which surrounds it (2) the way the word is formed (3) background knowledge of the students about the subject (E.O.I. de Sabinaningo organization , 1993).

## 2.2.8. Self Monitoring

Hanson (1996) views that the ability of a student to self-monitor his or her performance is a natural step toward becoming independent, which can only happen when students take responsibility for their own behavior and essentially become “agents of change” (P, 173-191). Furthermore, selfmonitoring can be used both to assess where students are functioning academically and behaviorally and to improve academic or behavioral performance (Carr, Punzo, Rutherford, Quinn & Mathur, 1993.P, 50-241).

# 2.3. Cultural Contexts in becoming readers

There is a generally accepted reality among first and second language readingresearchers and practitioners that students who must study in a second or foreignlanguage are almost always at a disadvantage,particularly in the areas of readingand writing. The portrayal of English language learners as ‘‘at-risk’’ learners with‘‘bundles of problems’’ has been well documented in national surveys of academicachievement (e.g., Applebee et al., 1987; Mullis et al., 1993), and actively encour-aged by a tradition of research, which involves a persistent search for disablingattributes of nonmainstream learners (e.g., Carson, 1992; Field and Aebersold,1990). This type of research has successfully promoted lasting misconceptions ofsuch learners as ‘marginalized’ and less able learners whose ‘‘cultures place different emphasis and value on various cognitive abilities’’ (Field and Aebersold,1990, p.. Examples of such misconceptions include claims that in some cultures, such asMorocco and Western Samoa, the cognitive and analytical skills and strategiesrequired in reading comprehension are not promoted because

‘‘rote memorizationand oral memorization constitute reading instruction’’ (Field andAebersold, 1990,p. 41). These misconceptions, which are unfortunately quite common among some educators, have important practical implications for the way educators interactwith these learners.A more constructive type of second language research, initiated by a few researchteams (e.g., Jimenez, 1997; Jimenez et al., 1995, 1996; Sheorey and Mokhtari, 2001),encourages a search for a more accurate and complete characterization of secondlanguage readers and a search for ‘‘enabling, rather than disabling, attributes of non mainstream populations’’ (Jimenez et al., 1995, p. 68).

# Conclusion

With a focus on the component processes, individualdifferences in reading skill become a matter of under-standing how these processes and their interactionscontribute to successful reading outcomes. Where the successful outcome is reading individual words, theprocesses arelocalized in knowledge of word forms—both general and word-specific phonological andorthographic knowledge—and word meanings. In-

adequate knowledge of word forms is the centralobstacle to acquiring high levels of skill. Severeproblems in word reading reflect severe problems

inphonological knowledge. Where the successful out- come is comprehension, the critical processes continue to include word processes, and problems in com-prehension are associated with problems in wordprocessing. In addition, processes that contribute tobasic sentence

understanding and sentence integration become critical. Processes that provide basic prop-ositional meaning, including word meaning selectionand parsing, and those that establish coherent textrepresentations (integration processes, inferences,monitoring, conceptual knowledge) become critical tosuccess. Less skilled readers, as assessed by comprehension tests, often show difficulties in one or moreof these processes. Less clear is how to understand thecauses of observed failures. A processing model helps to see the relationships among component processesand to guide studies of skill differences. The candidatecauses of skill variation cannot be equally probable,when the output of lower-level processes are needed by higher level processes.

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