

Lecture 18: TEACHING READING –3

I. Guiding Principles

Reading is a very important, maybe the most important skill for students who need English for academic purposes. The teaching of reading has often involved little more than giving students a text and requiring them to answer a series of comprehension questions when they have finished. This procedure is effective in that it can determine how much students understand the text, but it does nothing to provide them with the skills and strategies needed to become efficient and independent readers. In contemporary teaching, reading lessons should be planned in a pre-, while- and post-reading framework in order to build background knowledge, practice reading skills within the reading texts themselves, and engage in comprehensible instruction.

The following guiding principles are important to keep in mind while teaching reading.

Reading is an active skill.

- Instruction should concentrate on teaching reading strategies.
- Students should be aware of the purpose of reading.
- Students should be aware of the value and purpose of pre-, during- and post-reading activities.
- Top-down and bottom-up strategies should be used interactively so that they complement each other.

Reading is an independent activity important for individual growth.

- Students should be exposed to a variety of text types.
- Reading instruction should provide students with the ability to get access to other resources through reading.
- Reading should be input for students' other language skills.

- Extensive reading outside of intensive classroom reading is necessary to develop good reading skills.
- Instruction should include discussion of topics interesting to students.

II. Two Checklists

Checklist of criteria for choosing suitable reading passages:

- Content is relevant, enriching and interesting.
- Language is useful and authentic.
- Text is authentic.
- Length, difficulty, etc. of text make it accessible to students.
- Texts should represent a variety of genres.
- Topics should be reintroduced and expanded upon in future grade levels.
- Texts should help students develop cross-cultural awareness.

Checklist of criteria for choosing suitable reading activities:

- Students should be encouraged to do unusual activities, like planning a TV presentation, about simplified reading texts.
- Pre-reading activities should emphasize prediction strategies and top-down processes.
- While-reading activities should emphasize interpretation strategies, for example, guessing from context, making inferences and testing hypotheses.
- Bottom-up strategies should be focused on in more intense reading of the passage (not the pre-reading activities).
- Post-reading activities should provide students an opportunity to use and apply new information from the text.

III. Application of theory to practice

CLASSROOM PRACTICE	UNDERLYING THEORY
<i>Pre-reading</i>	
1. Schema activation, prediction: Teacher asks several questions related to individuals, e.g. their inherited characteristics and then introduces the key term, e.g. "heredity".	Drawing students into the text by getting them to think about what they already know about the topic (e.g. heredity) helps them prepare for the reading task.
2. Vocabulary preview: Teacher asks if there are any words which are similar to Vietnamese words. Teacher gives the Vietnamese translation for the key term.	
3. "Think and Decide" exercises.	
4. Preview:	
a) Teacher asks the students to quickly skim the text to get an idea about the actual content of the passage. Students may skim by focusing on the first and last sentence of each paragraph.	Once students can identify the main ideas in a text, it is easier for them to read for details. Getting the main idea is a top-down skill. Top-down skills are needed for good reading comprehension.
b) The students are asked to scan the text and circle the key vocabulary terms and to read the sentence containing a key word quickly.	This technique helps students develop their ability to look for key information.
<i>During reading</i>	
1. The teacher asks students to read the text in about three minutes without dictionaries.	This time-limit encourages students to read quickly without worrying about understanding every word. Students are asked not to use dictionaries in order to practice getting meaning from context.

2. The teacher asks students to do "Read and Understand".	This exercise allows students to "read" the passage a second time in order to get more information and to connect new information to old information.
<i>Post-reading</i>	
1. Students do one of the "Read and Understand"	
a) The teacher asks students to do the cloze exercise (in which they are to fill in the missing words).	This exercise relates the text to individual personal details.
b) The teacher asks students to choose the sentence.	This exercise encourages students to identify supporting detail and check comprehension.
2. The teacher asks students to choose the title and explain why they made the choice they did.	This is a communicative exercise which encourages students to support their opinions.
3. Letter writing.	This provides an opportunity for students to apply their new vocabulary to an authentic and personally relevant activity.
4. Guided paragraph.	The guided information (e.g. a chart) provides students with enough help to write in an academic format that is currently beyond their ability but which they will eventually be expected to master.

Review Questions.

1. What are the principles which govern the process of teaching reading?
2. List some criteria for choosing suitable reading passages.
3. Suggest some activities in each of the reading stages. What principles do these activities base themselves on?

Lecture 19: TEACHING WRITING -1

I. INTRODUCTION:

1. A foreign language is never really learned until a person can use it to communicate his ideas. Communication implies proficiency in both oral (listening and speaking) and writing skills (reading and writing).
2. Therefore the four phases of language learning must be well integrated with one another. Materials should be presented orally first. Written work should be in balance with other class activities.
3. Students are often given practice in writing through the following types of writing exercises.

II. TYPES OF WRITING EXERCISES

1. *Simple copying:* The students copy from the blackboard the sentences that they have practised orally or have read.
2. *Gap-filling:* Students listen to the teacher, then write out the complete sentences:

Ex: Paper ____ wood. It ____ the Chinese in ____ .

3. *Re-ordering words:* Write the sentences correctly.

Ex: We/ six o'clock/ and/ tea/ drink/ get up/ at.

Then/ the patients/ wake/ go/ and/ the wards/ we/ round.

Sometimes/ medicines/ injections/ them/ we/ or/ give.

4. *Matching exercises:*

Ex: Match the two halves, (a) and (b):

(a)

A pilot

A nurse

An engineer

A farmer

A librarian

(b)

designs machines

takes care of books

flies aeroplanes

looks after sick people

grows crops

5. Dictation:

- A dictation lesson is a teacher's tool for checking the mastery of several of the things she has taught.
- The selection dictated should contain only structures that have been studied. Write the unfamiliar words on the board.

Review Questions.

1. What are the different types of writing exercises. Give illustrative examples.
2. State the role of a dictation in the teaching of a language.

Lecture 20: TEACHING WRITING –2

I. Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles are important to keep in mind while teaching writing.

The learner is central, or humanistic principles:

- Learners should be aware of the purpose of writing.
- Learners should be made aware of the value and purpose of pre-, during and post-writing activities.
- Top-down and bottom-up strategies should be used interactively so that they complement each other. These strategies inform the production of sentence-level, paragraph-level and essay-level texts.
- Classroom activities should be set up so that students are unconsciously practicing one particular writing skill.
- The learner's knowledge, interests and feelings are important and need to be encouraged and built upon.
- Learners should be seen as the main resource both of meanings (things to talk about) and language (ways of talking).
- Learners should be free from authority, prescription, overt correctness and, according to some in the humanistic movement, the imposition of language models.
- The teacher should create a context in which the learner's expression is encouraged and respected.

II. Checklists of criteria for approach writing activities/ procedures:

- Organizing the information to be conveyed.

- Deciding on the relative prominence to be given to any particular point.
- Incorporating what one learns from listening or reading.
- Expressing complex ideas appropriately.
- Understanding and expressing cultural constraints.
- Understanding genres and taking them into account.
- Knowing and then persuading one's readers.
- Rewriting, including expressing meaning exactly and writing accurately.

III. Application of theory to practice

CLASSROOM PRACTICE	UNDERLYING THEORY
<i>Overview of the writing lesson</i>	
1. The writing lesson is divided into three stages: Pre-writing, while writing and post writing.	1. This process-oriented approach to writing gives students the guidance and encouragement they need in order to become good writers.
2. All three stages use the same context (e.g. talking about people).	2. The context helps students comprehend and reinforces the learning process.
3. The task for each activity is clearly set.	3. Students need a clear purpose for writing.
4. The lesson is based on integrated-skills activities.	4. Integrated-skills activities give students more chance to develop their communicative competence. The text may recycle items of spoken or written language and can be used as an introduction to organizing ideas in the form of a paragraph.

<i>Pre-writing stage</i>	
1. Vocabulary review	1. Pre-writing activities help students to start their papers; they involve the students in a composition topic, let them realize what might be included in their papers, help them work out rhetorical problems or review or provide useful vocabulary.
2. Discussion with incomplete information e.g. an incomplete card, guessing with the guiding questions.	2. Using the incomplete cards helps student to organize their ideas into meaningful sequences or groups of ideas. The guiding questions create a dialogue between the students and teachers as a way to respond to tentative organization patterns.
3. Skimming the reading passage.	3. Skimming the passage gives students a general idea of the content and format of the passage.
<i>While-writing stage</i>	
1. Filling in the blanks in the card with information from the reading passage.	1. This card is like a set of directions that guides students through the writing process.
2. Scanning the completed card.	2. For this type of activity the students are given model text of some kind as cues or helpful ideas.
3. Students write a similar paragraph individually.	3. This is a kind of controlled or guided writing appropriate to the elementary or post-elementary level students.