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# DEVELOPING READING SKILLS

Activities based on Parrot, M. (1993) *Tasks for Language Teachers*. Cambridge CUP. pp. 174-191

## TASK 1: TYPES OF READING

1A. Match the following situations with the name of each reading skill.

- a. You read a poem by a poet you particularly like. You enjoy paying close attention to the poet's use of language.
- b. You visit a library to research a particular topic. You quickly read through the books and articles to determine whether they contain information on the topic and are therefore worth borrowing.
- c. You are on a holiday and sit down to read the latest thriller by your favourite writer.
- d. While waiting for an appointment you pick up a magazine and discover an article that is of great interest to you. You don't have time to read the entire article, but you want to extract as much information as possible in the time you have.
- e. You have to write a response article to a book or article. You pause to consider the points that the author makes and decide whether you agree or not.

*Receptive reading*  
*Reflective reading*  
*Skimming*  
*Scanning*  
*Intensive reading*

1b. Provide an additional example for each of the following reading types

- a. Receptive reading \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- b. Reflective reading \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- c. Skimming \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- d. Scanning \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- e. Intensive reading \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## TASK 2: EFFECTIVE AND INEFFECTIVE READING STRATEGIES

Look at the following list of techniques that might be used to develop listening skills. Indicate which techniques you believe to be *effective* or *ineffective* writing **E** or **I** respectively against each sentence.

- a. Mouthing the words
- b. Looking for a topic sentence in paragraphs
- c. Trying to use the co-text in order to work out the meaning of words
- d. Mentally translate everything
- e. Mentally translate the more difficult passages
- f. Trying to distinguish between main and secondary points
- g. Use pictures, headings and introductory sentences to speculate about the content
- h. Choosing a combination of strategies according to the nature of the text and the purpose of the reading
- i. Using a dictionary to translate all the words.

### TASK 3: USING A TEXT

Place the following lesson segments in a reasonable order

- a. Students ask the teacher questions about unfamiliar vocabulary
- b. Students read very quickly in order to work out the answer to one or two general questions
- c. Students predict the content of the text based on the title
- d. Students work out the meaning of selected words or expressions from the context
- e. The teacher teaches a few key words
- f. The teacher draws attention to some of the grammar in the text
- g. Students complete a detailed true / false exercise
- h. Students locate topic sentences in some of the paragraphs
- i. Students discuss topics related to the content of the text
- j. Students scan the text to pick out specific terms (e.g. proper names, colours etc.)

How many of these activities can be done in groups? Are there any advantages to this?

### TASK 4: PRACTICE

Devise a lesson plan using the text below

#### Kachru's Three Circles of English

The most influential model of the spread of English is Braj Kachru's model of World Englishes. In this model the diffusion of English is captured in terms of three Concentric Circles of the language: The Inner Circle, the Outer Circle, and the Expanding Circle.

The **Inner Circle** refers to English as it originally took shape and was spread across the world in the first diaspora. In this transplantation of English, speakers from England carried the language to Australia, New Zealand and North America. The Inner Circle thus represents the traditional historical and sociolinguistic bases of English in regions where it is now used as a primary language: the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, Malta, Anglophone Canada and South Africa, and some of Caribbean territories. English is the native language or mother tongue of most people in these countries. The total number of English speakers in the inner circle is as high as 380 million, of whom some 120 million are outside the United States.

The **Outer Circle** of English was produced by the second diaspora of English, which spread the language through the colonization by Great Britain and the US in Asia and Africa. In these regions, English is not the native tongue, but serves as a useful lingua franca between ethnic and language groups. Higher education, the legislature and judiciary, national commerce and so on may all be carried out predominantly in English. This circle includes India, Nigeria, the Philippines, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Malaysia, Tanzania, Kenya, non-Anglophone South Africa and others. The total number of English speakers in the outer circle is estimated to range from 150 million to 300 million.

Finally, the **Expanding Circle** encompasses countries where English plays no historical or governmental role, but where it is nevertheless widely used as a medium of international communication. This includes much of the rest of the world's population not categorised above: China, Russia, Japan, most of Europe, Korea, Egypt, Indonesia, etc. The total in this expanding circle is the most difficult to estimate, especially because English may be employed for specific, limited purposes, usually business English. The estimates of these users range from 100 million to one billion.

