Assessing Reading
-10th Lecture-

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Genres of reading

1. Academic reading

- General interest articles (in magazines, newspapers, etc.)
- Technical reports (e.g., lab reports), professional journal articles
- Reference material (dictionaries, online encyclopedias, etc.)
- Textbooks, theses
- Essays, papers
- Test directions
- Editorials and opinion writing

2. Job-related reading

- Messages (e.g., phone messages'
- Letters/e-mails
- Memos (e.g., interoffice)
- Reports (e.g., job evaluations, project reports)
- Schedules, labels, signs, announcements
- Forms, applications, questionnaires
- Financial documents (bills, invoices, etc.)
- Directories (telephone, office, etc.)
- Manuals, directions

Genres of reading

3. Personal reading

- Newspapers and magazines
- E-mails, greeting cards, invitations
- Messages, texts, notes, lists, blogs
- Schedules (train, bus, plane, etc.)
- Recipes, menus, maps, calendars
- Advertisements (commercials, want ads)
- Novels, short stories, jokes, drama, poetry
- Financial documents (e.g., checks, tax forms, loan applications)
- Forms, questionnaires, medical reports, immigration documents
- Comic strips, cartoons

Microskills for reading comprehension

1. Discriminate among the distinctive graphemes (letters or letter combinations that produce a phoneme) and orthographic patterns of English
2. Retain chunks of language of different lengths in short-term memory
3. Process writing at an efficient rate of speed to suit the purpose
4. Recognize a core of words and interpret word order patterns and their significance
5. Recognize grammatical word classes (nouns, verbs, etc.), systems (e.g., tense, agreement, pluralization), patterns, rules, and elliptical forms
6. Recognize that a particular meaning may be expressed in different grammatical forms
7. Recognize cohesive devices in written discourse and their role in signaling the relations between and among clauses

Macroskills for reading comprehension

- Recognize the **rhetorical conventions** of written discourse and their significance for **interpretation**
- **Recognize the communicative functions** of written texts, according to **form and purpose**
- **Infer context** that is not explicit by activating **schemata** (**using background knowledge**)
- From described events, ideas, and so on, **infer links** and connections **between events**, deduce causes and effects, and detect such relations as main idea, supporting idea, new information, given information, generalization, and exemplification
- **Distinguish between literal and implied meanings**
- **Detect culturally specific references and interpret them in a context of the** appropriate cultural schemata
- **Develop and use a battery of reading strategies, such as scanning and** skimming, detecting discourse markers, guessing the meaning of words from context, and activating schemata to interpret texts

Principal strategies for reading comprehension

Some possible assessment criteria to consider in assessing reading comprehension:

1. Identify your purpose in reading a text
2. Apply spelling rules and conventions for bottom-up decoding
3. Use lexical analysis (prefixes, roots, suffixes, etc.) to determine meaning
4. Guess at meaning (of words, idioms, etc.) when you aren't certain
5. Skim the text for the gist and for main ideas
6. Scan the text for specific information (names, dates, key words)
7. Use silent reading techniques for rapid processing
8. Use marginal notes, outlines, charts, or semantic maps to understand and retain information
9. Distinguish between literal and implied meanings
10. Use discourse markers (e g., "in addition," "however," "nevertheless") to process relations

Types of Reading

The variety of reading is derived from the different types of texts (genres).

1. **Perceptive R.:** attending to the components of larger stretches of discourse: letters, words, punctuation, etc. Bottom-up processing is implied..

2. **Selective R.:** reading recognition of lexical, grammatical, or discourse features of language within a very short stretch of language. Stimuli include sentences, brief paragraphs, etc. Brief responses are intended and a combination of bottom-up and top-down processing may be used.

3. **Interactive R.:** the reader must psycholinguistically interact with several paragraphs to one page or more including; anecdotes, short narratives and descriptions, etc. The focus here is to identify relevant features (lexical, symbolic, grammatical, and discourse) and Top-down processing is typical.

- **4. Extensive R:** texts of more than a page including professional articles, essays, technical reports, short stories, and books. Top-down processing is implied.

Types of Reading
by length, focus, and process

	Length			Focus		Process	
	Short	**Medium**	**Long**	**Form**	**Meaning**	**Bottom-Up**	**Top-Down**
Perceptive	••			••		••	
Selective	•	•		••	•	•	•
Interactive		••		•	••	•	••
Extensive			••		••		••

• Moderate emphasis
•• Strong emphasis

Designing Assessment Tasks of Reading

FIRST: PERCEPTIVE READING

1) Reading Aloud: [S, R]

- Test-takers read separate letters, words, and/or short sentences.

- Because the assessment is of reading comprehension, any recognizable oral approximation of the target response is considered correct.

2) Written Response: [R, W]

- Test-takers reproduce the reading text in writing.

- Stimuli are the same of reading aloud.

- Errors in the response must be evaluated carefully whether they are reading or writing skill errors.

FIRST: PERCEPTIVE READING

3) Multiple- Choice: (including True/False, Choose/ Circle the Letter, & Matching

Minimal pair distinction

Test-takers read:*
- **Circle 5 for same or D for different.**

1. led   let   S   D
2. bit   bit   S   D
3. seat   set   S   D
4. too   to   S   D

***ln the case of very low-level learners, the teacher/ administrator reads directions**

Grapheme recognition task

Test-takers read:*
- **Circle the "odd" item, the one that doesn't "belong."**

1. piece   peace   piece
2. book   book   boot

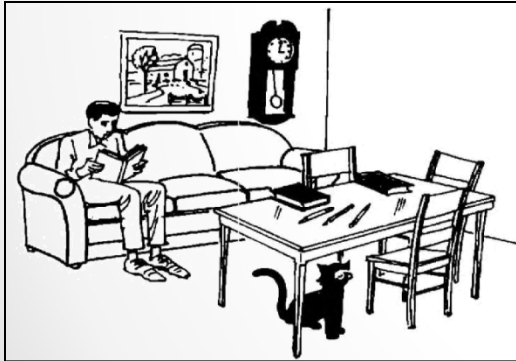***ln the case of very low-level learners, the teacher/ administrator reads directions**

FIRST: PERCEPTIVE READING

4) Picture-Cued Items: [R & L]

Picture-cued word identification

Test-takers hear:*

- Look at the picture. Then, read the word on each card and **point** to the object written on the card.

Cat

Clock

Chair

Picture-cued sentence identification

Test-takers read:*

- **Point** to the part of the picture that you read about here.

The man is reading a book.

The cat is under the table.

Stimulus: the previous picture

FIRST: PERCEPTIVE READING

4) Picture-Cued Items:

Picture-cued true/false sentence identification

Test-takers hear:*
- **Look at the picture. Then, read the word on each card and point to the object written on the card.**

1. The pencils are under the table. T F
2. The cat is on the table. T F
3. The picture is over the couch. T F

Stimulus: the previous picture

Picture-cued matching word identification

Label objects in the picture with A, B, C, D & E and ask the test-takers to match them with a list of words.

Test-takers read:*
1. Clock _____
2. Chair _____
3. Books _____
4. Cat _____
5. Table _____

Stimulus: the previous picture

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FIRST: PERCEPTIVE READING

4) **Picture-Cued Items:**

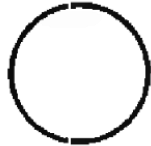## Multiple- Choice Picture-cued word identification

Test-takers read:*

- **Rectangle**

Test-takers see and choose the correct item:

A   B   C   D

SECOND: SELECTIVE READING
Level Objective: Form (vocabulary and grammar)

1) **Multiple-Choice (for Form-Focused Criteria)**
   - **Advantage: Easy to administer & score**

Multiple-choice vocabulary/grammar tasks

1. He's not married. He's_____.

   A. young B. single C. first D. husband

2. If there's no doorbell, please___ on the door.

   A. kneel, B. type C. knock   D. shout

3. The mouse is_____ the bed.

   A. Under B. around C. between D. into

Contextualized Multiple-choice vocabulary/grammar tasks

Manager: Do you like to work by yourself?
Employee: Yes, I like to work _____.

   A. independently
   B. definitely
   C. impatiently
   D. rapidly

SECOND: SELECTIVE READING

Level Objective: Form (vocabulary and grammar)

1) Multiple-Choice (for <u>Form</u>-Focused Criteria)

Multiple-choice cloze vocabulary/grammar tasks

I've lived in the United States (1)_____ three years. I (2)_____ live in Costa Rica. I (3)_____ speak any English. I used to (4)_____ homesick, but now I enjoy (5)_____ here. I have never (6)_____ back home (7)_____ I came to the United States, but I might (8)_____ to visit my family soon.

1. A. since   B. for   C. during
2. A. used to   B. use to   C. was
3. A. couldn't   B. could   C. can
4. A. been   B. be   C. being

5. A. live   B. to live   C. living
6. A. be   B. been   C. was
7. A. when   B. while   C. since
8. A. go   B. will go   C. going

SECOND: SELECTIVE READING
Level Objective: Form (vocabulary and grammar)

2) Matching Tasks

Vocabulary matching tasks

Test-takers read*
Write in the letter of the definition on the right that matches the word on the left.

___ 1. exhausted   a. unhappy
___ 2. enthusiastic   b. tired
___ 3. empathetic   c. excited
___ 4. disappointed   d.understanding
                     of others

Fill-in vocabulary tasks

1. At the end of the long race, the runners were totally_____.
2. My parents were ____ with my bad performance on the final exam.
3. Everyone in the office was_____ about the new salary raises.
4. 4. The_____ listening of the counselor made Christina feel well understood.

    1. exhausted   2. enthusiastic
    3. empathetic   4. disappointed

SECOND: SELECTIVE READING
Level Objective: Form (vocabulary and grammar)

3) Editing Tasks

Multiple-choice grammar editing task (error- detection)

Test-talkers read: Choose the underlined word that is not correct.

1. The <u>abrasively</u> action of the wind <u>wears</u> away <u>softer</u> <u>layers</u> of rock.
          A   B   C   D

2. There are two <u>way</u> of <u>making</u> a gas <u>condense</u>: cooling it or <u>putting</u> it under pressure.
          A   B   C   D

3. Researchers have <u>discovered</u> that the <u>application</u> of bright light can sometimes be <u>uses</u> to <u>overcome</u> jet lag.
          A   B
          C   D

SECOND: SELECTIVE READING
(Level Objective: Form (vocabulary and grammar)

4) Picture- Cued Tasks

### Multiple-choice picture-cued response
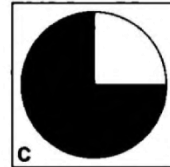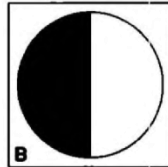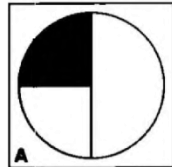### (Visual Representations)

Test-talkers read a three-paragraph passage, one sentence of which is:

During at least three-quarters of the year, the Arctic is frozen.

Test-takers then read an instruction:

Click on the chart that shows the relative amount of time each year that water is available to plants in the Arctic

Test-takers see the following four pictures:
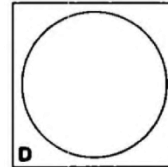
SECOND: SELECTIVE READING
Level Objective: Form (vocabulary and grammar)

4) Picture- Cued Tasks

Diagram-labeling task
### *(Definitions)*

Test-talkers read:

Label the picture with the number of the corresponding item described below,

1. wire supports extending from the hub of a wheel to its perimeter
2. a long, narrow support pole between the seat and the handlebars
3. a small, geared wheel concentric with the rear wheel
4. a long, linked, flexible metal device that propels the vehicle

Test-talkers see:
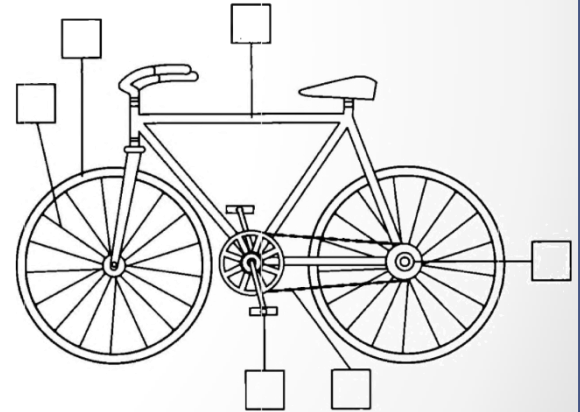
SECOND: SELECTIVE READING
Level Objective: Form (vocabulary and grammar)

5) **Gap-Filling Tasks [R, W]**

Disadvantages:
- Low validity (integrates reading & writing skills)
- Not easy to score (different writing responses)

Sentence completion tasks

Oscar: Doctor, what should I do if I get sick?

Doctor: It is best to stay home and _____. If you have a fever, _____. You should drink as much _____. The worst thing you can do is _____. You should also _____.

THIRD: INTERACTIVE READING
Level Objectives: Form & meaning

1) Cloze Tasks

Difficulty depends on choosing deletions and scoring

A. **Deletion:**
1. **Fixed- ratio deletion**: every seventh word (plus or minus two) is deleted.
2. **Rational deletion**: certain grammatical or discourse functions of words are deleted.

B. **Scoring:**
1. **Exact-word scoring**: Test-taker has to insert the exact word that was originally deleted..
2. **Appropriate-word scoring**: test-taker supplies any word that is grammatically correct and makes good sense in the context.

* Multiple Choice Cloze test is the best option to increase reliability in scoring.

THIRD: INTERACTIVE READING

Level Objectives: Form & meaning

1) Cloze Tasks [R, W]

Cloze Test, fixed-ratio deletion (every seventh word)

The recognition that one's feelings of (1)_____ and unhappiness can coexist much like (2)_____and hate in a close relationship (3)_____ offer valuable clues on how to (4)_____ a happier life. It suggests, for (5)_____, that changing or avoiding things that (6)_____ you miserable may well make you (7)_____ miserable but probably no happier.

Cloze Test, rational deletion (prepositions and conjunctions)

The recognition that one's feelings (1)_____ happiness (2)_____ unhappiness can coexist much like love and hate (3)_____ a close relationship may offer valuable clues (4)_____ how to lead a happier life. It suggests, (5)_____ example, that changing (6)_____ avoiding things that make you miserable may well make you less miserable (7)_____ probably no happier.

THIRD: INTERACTIVE READING
Level Objectives: Form & meaning

2) Impromptu Reading Plus Comprehension Questions

Reading comprehension passage

- A reading comprehension passage followed by questions.
- The questions should represent a sample of the test-takers reading abilities (such as; the main idea, certain vocabulary, expressions/ idioms, inferences, grammatical features, etc.)

Questions 1–10

The Hollywood sign in the hills that line the northern border of Los Angeles is a famous landmark recognized the world over. The white-painted, 50-foot-high, sheet metal letters can be seen from great distances across the Los Angeles basin.

(5) The sign was not constructed, as one might suppose, by the movie business as a means of celebrating the importance of Hollywood to this industry; instead, it was first constructed in 1923 as a means of advertising homes for sale in a 500-acre housing subdivision in a part of Los Angeles called "Hollywoodland." The sign that was constructed at the time, of course, said "Hollywoodland."

(10) Over the years, people began referring to the area by the shortened version "Hollywood," and after the sign and its site were donated to the city in 1945, the last four letters were removed.

The sign suffered from years of disrepair, and in 1973 it needed to be completely replaced, at a cost of $27,700 per letter. Various celebrities were instrumental in helping to raise needed funds. Rock star Alice Cooper, for example, bought an O in memory of Groucho Marx, and Hugh Hefner of Playboy fame held a benefit party to raise the money for the Y. The construction of the new sign was finally completed in 1978.

1. What is the topic of this passage?
   (A) A famous sign
   (B) A famous city
   (C) World landmarks
   (D) Hollywood versus Hollywoodland
   (C) a construction company
   (D) the city of Los Angeles

2. The expression "the world over" in line 2 could best be replaced by
   (A) in the northern parts of the world
   (B) on top of the world
   (C) in the entire world
   (D) in the skies

4. The pronoun "it" in line 7 refers to
   (A) the sign
   (B) the movie business
   (C) the importance of Hollywood
   (D) this industry

5. According to the passage, the Hollywood sign was first built in
   (A) 1923
   (B) 1949
   (C) 1973

THIRD: INTERACTIVE READING
Level Objectives: Form & meaning

3) Short-Answer Tasks [R, W]

Open-ended reading comprehension questions

- **An alternative to multiple-choice questions following reading passages**

1. **What do you think the main idea, of this passage is?**
2. **What would you infer from the passage about the future of air travel?**
3. **In line 6 the word "sensation" is used. From the context, what do you think this word means?**

4. Editing (Longer Texts)

Contextualized grammar editing tasks

- **Detecting errors in long passages of 200 to 300 words.**

(1) Ever since supermarkets first appeared, they have been take over the world.
   A   B   C   D

(2) Supermarkets have changed people's lifestyles, yet and at the same time,
      A   B   C

changes in people's lifestyles have encouraged the opening of supermarkets. (3) As
                              D

a result this, many small stores have been forced out of business. (4) Moreover,
   A   B   C   D   A

some small stores will be able to survive this unfavorable situation.
                   B   C   D

THIRD: INTERACTIVE READING
Level Objectives: Form & meaning

5) Scanning

- Test-takers are presented with a text and required for rapid identification of relevant information.

Possible stimuli:
- one- to two-page news article
- essay
- chapter in a textbook

Possible info to identify:
- date, name, or place in an article
- setting for a narrative or story
- principal divisions of a chapter

6. Ordering Tasks (Sequencing)

- The sequence of events or ideas to form a text (story, essay, etc.)
- Possible different sequences make scoring difficult

Put the following sentences in the correct order
- A it was called "The Last Waltz"
- B the street was in total darkness
- C because it was one he and Richard had learned at school
- D Peter looked outside
- E he recognized the tune
- F and it seemed deserted
- G he thought he heard someone whistling

THIRD: INTERACTIVE READING

Level Objectives: Form & meaning

7) Information Transfer [R, S, W]:

Reading Charts, Maps, Graphs, Diagrams (Interpreting Graphics)

- Converting nonverbal input (graphics) into comprehensible verbal outcome.
- information transfer from one skill (understanding symbolic or nonverbal information) to another (speaking/writing).

Tasks for assessing interpretation of graphic information

Test-takers read a graphic; answer simple, direct information questions.
Ex.:

Map: **"Where is the post office?"**

Family tree: **"Who is Tony's great grandmother?"**

Statistical table: **"What does p < .05 mean?"**

FOURTH: EXTENSIVE READING
Level Objective: meaning

❖ **Applicable tasks for extensive reading from previous categories**

- impromptu reading plus comprehension questions
- short-answer tasks
- editing
- scanning
- ordering
- information transfer
- interpretation (discussed under graphics)

1. **Skimming Tasks [R, S/W]**

- rapid coverage of reading matter to determine its gist or main idea.
- test-takers skim a text and answer questions, such as:

  1. What is the main idea of this text?
  2. What is the author's purpose in writing the text?
  3. What kind of writing is this (newspaper article, manual, novel, etc.)?
  4. What type of writing is this (expository, technical, narrative, etc.)?

FOURTH: EXTENSIVE READING
Level Objective: meaning

2) Summarizing and Responding [R, W]

- **Test-takers are asked to write a summary of a text.**

Directions for summarizing: [R, W]

Write a summary of the text. Your summary should be about one paragraph in length {100-150 words) and should include your understanding of the main idea and supporting ideas.

Evaluating summaries is difficult, so here is a suggestion:

- Criteria for assessing a summary
1. Expresses accurately the main idea and supporting ideas
2. Is written in the student's own words; occasional vocabulary from the original
3. text is acceptable
4. Is logically organized
5. Displays facility in the use of language to clearly express ideas in the text

FOURTH: EXTENSIVE READING
Level Objective: meaning

3) Notetaking and Outlining [R, W]

- A reader's comprehension of extensive texts.
- Their utilities lie in:
  1. informal assessment due to the difficulty of controlling the conditions and time frame.
  2. In the strategic training of learners (how to retain information through marginal notes that highlight key information or organizational outlines).

References

- **Brown, H. D. & Abeywickrama, P. (2012). Language Assessment: Principles & Classroom Practices. 2ⁿᵈ Ed. Pearson Education, USA.**