



NEERAJ®

READING AND SPEAKING SKILLS

B.E.G.L.A.-138

B.A. General - 4th Semester

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Based on

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**Sample Preview
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QUESTION PAPER

June – 2023

(Solved)

READING AND SPEAKING SKILLS **B.E.G.L.A.-138**

Time: 3 Hours]

[Maximum Marks: 100

Note: Answer all the questions.

SECTION-A

Q. 1. Read the passage given below and answer the questions which follow :

From Yamini Aiyar's article in the *Hindustan Times*, Wednesday, June 01, 2022, Page 14.

Three catastrophic global events – the corona virus pandemic, the Russia-Ukraine war, and the climate crisis–have exposed the fragility of India's rural economy. Now as India grapples with rising food inflation and slowing rural demand, policymakers must design a durable policy that goes beyond *ad-hoc* export bans.

Amid the pandemic induced economic crisis, the rural economy was a site of re-silience. In 2020-2021, agriculture was the only sector of the economy that remained strong, growing at 3.3%. Crucially it provided the country with its most resilient safety net. A slew of policy measures enhanced Minimum Support Price (MSP) and procurement kept granaries well stocked, ensuring basic food security. Moreover a good monsoon and two successive bumper harvests coincided with rising global prices which created a perfect condition for robust agri-commodity exports.

Along with the provision of basic foodgrains, agriculture was also India's primary employer. The Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy recorded that between 2019 and 2022 agriculture added 11 million new jobs while the rest of the economy shed 15 million jobs. Agriculture, long considered the employer of last resort for policymakers emerged as the only employer and primary safety net for millions of Indians amid the pandemic.

However, for most, India's agriculture offers subsistence employment rather than a robust substitute for non-farm income. Far from being

insulated, the largely informal rural economy was devastated by Covid-19. Rural wages, particularly non-farm wages declined sharply during the pandemic and are yet to recover.

India's agriculture policy has incentivised over-production of cereals and sugarcane while discouraging diversification. Ironically, this perverse policy ensured food security during the pandemic. However, after the pandemic global supply chain disruptions and climate shocks like the heat wave of March caused a steep rise in commodity prices. While cereal and sugar prices remained insulated from international price fluctuations, inflation was driven mainly by edible oils.

Policy-making needs to balance between food security needs and the need to diversify in order to increase farm income. A strong rural economy is the backbone of India's food and climate security and the only way for crisis management in an increasingly vulnerable global economy.

Questions:

(a) Which global events have affected our rural economy and in what way?

Ans. Three catastrophic global events–the corona virus pandemic, the Russia-Ukraine war, and the climate crisis–have exposed the fragility of India's rural economy. Now as India grapples with rising food inflation and slowing rural demand, policy-makers must design a durable policy that goes beyond *ad-hoc* export bans.

(b) What shows that our rural economy is by and large resilient?

Ans. Amid the pandemic induced economic crisis, the rural economy was a site of resilience. In 2020-2021, agriculture was the only sector of the economy that remained strong, growing at 3.3%. Crucially, it provided the country with its most resilient safety net.

(c) Which policy regarding agriculture is talked about in the passage and what is the author's suggestion about policy-making?

Ans. A slew of policy measures enhanced Minimum Support Price (MSP) and procurement kept granaries well stocked, ensuring basic food security. Moreover a good monsoon and two successive bumper harvests coincided with rising global prices which created a perfect condition for robust agri-commodity exports.

(d) What are the strong and weak points of our agricultural policy?

Ans. Along with the provision of basic foodgrains, agriculture was also India's primary employer. The Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy recorded that between 2019 and 2022 agriculture added 11 million new jobs while the rest of the economy shed 15 million jobs. However, for most, India's agriculture offers subsistence employment rather than a robust substitute for non-farm income. Far from being insulated, the largely informal rural economy was devastated by Covid-19. Rural wages, particularly non-farm wages declined sharply during the pandemic and are yet to recover.

(e) What is the common perception about India's agriculture?

Ans. India's agriculture policy has incentivised over-production of cereals and sugarcane while discouraging diversification. Ironically, this perverse policy ensured food security during the pandemic.

Q. 2. Find words from the passage which convey similar meanings as given below:

(a) a situation of serious problems

Ans. catastrophic

(b) increase in prices

Ans. inflation

(c) something that lasts long without becoming weaker

Ans. durable

(d) strong and healthy

Ans. robust

(e) to encourage by providing a benefit

Ans. incentivised

(f) a harmful or undesirable practice

Ans. perverse

(g) weak and without protection

Ans. fragility

(h) something which relates to the whole world

Ans. global

(i) disease that affects a large number of persons over a very wide area

Ans. pandemic

(j) something which is worth eating or consuming.

Ans. food grains

SECTION-B

Q. 3. What are the three common difficulties encountered during the acquisition of reading skills?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-1, Page No. 2, 'Developing Reading Skills'.

Q. 4. What is an expository text? Write about the various categories of expository text.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-5, Page No. 35, 'Comprehension' and 'Types of Expository Text'.

Q. 5. What are the advantages of telephone conversation? For which different purposes is telephone conversation used?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-13, Page No. 109, 'Different Aspects of Telephone Conversation'.

Q. 6. Write short notes on the following:

(a) Rhythm as a literary device

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-15, Page No. 121, 'Rhythm'.

(b) Stress types in English Language

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-15, Page No. 122, 'Stress'.

Q. 7. Write a note on the basic principles of good communication (7 Cs).

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-10, Page No. 79, '7Cs of Communication'.

Q. 8. Differentiate between argumentative and persuasive texts.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-9, Page No. 71, 'Difference between Argumentative and Persuasive Texts'.

Q. 9. What are the reading ability skills of comprehending literary texts – prose and poetry?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-4, Page No. 29, 'Developing Literary Reading Ability', 'Reading A Literary Text: Prose' and Page No. 30, 'Reading A Literary Text: Poetry'.



Sample Preview of The Chapter

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READING AND SPEAKING SKILLS

Block-I : Learning to Read Effectively



The Reading Process

INTRODUCTION

Reading helps in bettering our communication skills. Reading improves their overall language skills as well as critical thinking. Reading helps to increase their awareness of issues and concerns of businesses in emerging technologies. In this chapter, we will learn about reading and the skills and strategies of a successful reader.

CHAPTER AT A GLANCE

THE MODERN CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT: AN OVERVIEW

A classroom a place where teaching and learning takes place. It is a platform for the educator to display and transmit knowledge to the learners. It cannot be a site for perpetuating undemocratic life. It is also not a place for addressing social power. It is also a place for discussing issues of injustice, inequality and inadequacy.

In the context of language learning, the 5Cs—content, communication, cognition, culture and context are important.

In an article, “*The Social Context for Language Learning – A Neglected Situation?*”, by Michael P. Breen highlights two different perspectives namely research and teaching for the study of classroom language learning. He questions the specific contributions of the classroom to the process of language development and the ways a teacher might exploit the social reality of the classroom as a resource for the teaching of language.

A very intricate relationship exists between the social process of learners and their individual psychological processes and thus learning can happen twice: first at the social level and next at the individual level. First it happens between people (inter psychological) and thereafter it happens within the learner (intra psychological). In such a socio-cultural

intercourse, reading directly influences the psychological development of the learner by integrating the learning experiences of each individual with the group as a whole.

The expectations, values and beliefs of the learner also have influence on the learning environment. The classroom situation is metaphorically said as an experimental laboratory or a discourse podium and even to a coral garden.

Stephen Krashen’s second language acquisition theory compares the classroom as experimental laboratory. The classroom provides accurate and relevant information as well as holistic knowledge. The teacher is a surrogate experimental psychologist. He is responsible for facilitating comprehension for individual learners and reinforces positive learning behaviours. The teacher motivates the learners to read. The acquisition of a language through a conscious process of absorbing new facts and retaining the information or skills through formal instructions proves Krashen’s metaphor.

When it is said “The classroom as discourse”, the focus is on classroom-oriented research which intends to understand the discourse of classroom communication. It shows the teachers and learners as active readers engaged with each other whereby the classroom activity and inputs can be explored as a text through reading and discussion. It reveals much of the specific interaction patterns going on in a language learning situation like teacher-learner negotiation once a passage or text is read.

Malinowski’s classical studies of Trobriand Island cultures describes the classroom as coral garden. It suggests that to understand a language classroom, observation alone is inadequate. It means it is neither practical nor possible to understand the culture of the text just by learning the language or understanding the language by studying the culture and dialects through reading and discourse. A coral garden suggests the importance of understanding the classroom situation

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which can result in increasing learner engagement, motivation and participation for the betterment of language learning through reading with a highlighted purpose. It highlights the urgency and necessity of perceiving the classroom as a real place with its own culture to help us exploit its complexity as a resource for language learning especially through reading and interpretation. There are eight essential features of the culture of such a language classroom. This can be interactive, differentiated, collective, highly normative, asymmetrical inherently conservative, jointly constructed and immediately significant.

Breen suggests the classroom can provide directions for exploration and examination within the current language learning process. It means a possible future investigation for the culture of the language classroom will be more of a revelation rather than just identifying it as a metaphor. In the attempt to relate Breen's metaphor to the contemporary reality of classroom situation, it could be extended to include "The classroom as terrarium" where a terrarium is a miniature version of an actual ecosystem similar to Breen's metaphor depicting the coral gardens with a collection of small plants growing in a transparent container.

Thus, reading is an essential skill to negotiate the heterogeneous variety of the classroom and to provide effective student-focused learning.

DEVELOPING READING SKILLS

Four skills needed for complete and holistic language learning are listening, speaking, reading and writing. All the four are equally vital and important for the learner, but reading is an indispensable part of the learning process. The development of reading skill in learner is essential and indispensable. Students augment their vocabulary and acquire fresh knowledge of life and the world through reading. Reading helps in improving comprehension, spelling, vocabulary and writing. If reading skill is not developed, it can adversely impact the performance of learners across a wide variety of curricular disciplines and have a negative impact on self-motivation and self-esteem of the learner.

Reading starts with mastering pre-literacy skills such as learning the alphabet and achieving phonemic awareness. This is followed knowing the phonetics through human or technological sources. The learner needs to understand the subtle differences between long and short sounds, vowels and consonants. The learner also needs to learn vocabulary including the meaning and sound. Higher levels of linguistic familiarity make a learner understand complex texts and processing more information in shorter amounts of time. Being a fast and efficient reader is important not just for classroom-

based lessons but also for satisfying requirements of assignments and performing well in standardized exams. However, learners develop and improve their reading skills at different speeds and thereby exhibit different levels of fluency and comprehension.

Learners may be considered ready to further develop the skill of reading accurately and appropriately when they:

- Identify and differentiate between consonant combinations.
- Identify and articulate the vowel combinations.
- Identify and differentiate both vowel and consonant sounds.
- Identify rhyming words even when spelt with a different letter pattern.
- Associate vowel and consonant sounds with letters.
- Identify upper and lower-case letters as well as italics and the basic punctuation marks.

The following are the three common difficulties the learner faced during the acquisition of reading skills:

Challenges of Decoding: Decoding happens when learners put sounds to letters to pronounce written words. Non-native readers face acute difficulty and confusion when they encounter new or unfamiliar expressions and even when they come across homonyms or the issue of different sounds made by the same vowel in different words.

Inadequate or Faulty Comprehension: Reading involves a process of negotiation from recognition of letters and words to understanding the meanings of phrases, sentences and paragraphs. When a non-native reader encounters vocabulary he does not know and recognise because of inaccurate decoding, he or she is likely to skip and progress to that part of the text which is simple and familiar. To overcome this, the non-native readers need to identify the gist of the passage and highlight the main ideas along with specific details and even infer.

Speed: Learners recognize more words by sight and the process of reading is accelerated. The learners' exposure to unfamiliar terms is more likely to increase. Reading is a cognitively demanding task and absorbing so much information in the mind while continuing to process text, can exhaust non-native readers. Thus, the speed of reading must be moderated by the readers according to their states of proficiency.

The Reading-Spelling Correspondence: English is full of silent letters and unexpected sounds. The learner is compelled to simply memorize the spelling of a word to recognise its written form. English is not the easiest language for initial readers because of the lack of exact correspondence between letters and sounds. There is more than one way to spell the same sound. It causes acute confusion and extreme difficulty for non-native English users.

CLASSIFICATION OF READING TECHNIQUES

Reading can be categorized into three types: extensive reading, intensive reading and oral reading.

- (a) Extensive reading means a culture and practice of reading through cultivating the habit of copious reading. In such reading, there is no overt focus on teaching reading or implementing reading within an instructional setting. The best way for learners to improve their reading skills is to read a variety and a large quantity of comprehensible material as per their respective levels of linguistic proficiency.
- (b) Intensive reading means the practice of reading skills in an instructional setting. Readers are exposed to a variety of materials and assigned activities like answering comprehension questions on the passage they have read. Learners need to look for critical information in the passage they are reading and make inferences. Intensive reading is instruction-based and forms the core of improving reading skills.
- (c) Oral reading does attract attention in multiple learning contexts. It is an integral part of reading especially in non-native English language contexts.

READING READINESS EXERCISES

The learner's readiness to read can be accomplished by starting the process of what is commonly known as Reading Readiness. There are exercises enable learners to recognize and read the letters and words and thereby mapping recognition is solidified in the mind.

Reading readiness exercises may or may not use linguistic materials, but must in every way possible be facilitating and familiar to the learners. The learning outcome of reading readiness exercises is to help foster a congenial atmosphere for learning reading and to develop motivation and interest towards reading. Some of the reading readiness exercises are: Visual Discrimination, Auditory Discrimination and Memory Training.

Visual Discrimination: In this type of exercises, directions like top, same, different, bottom, first, middle, second and last referring to objects, letters and words are presented in these exercises. For example, the students has to differentiate between *p* and *q*, between *d* and *p*. In the process of visual discrimination, names and shapes of the letters of the English alphabet, different forms of the same letters (upper and lower case, etc.), the ability to tell whether two letters or groups of letters are the same or different. Some possible discriminations can be checked through

questions like, which letter is at the top, at the bottom and in the middle of the page? or which object is the first, the second and the last? or are any of the objects, letters, or words the same as the one in the box? or even, pair the capital and the small letters as provided in the examples given in the text.

Auditory Discrimination: The learner needs to make auditory discriminate for listening. The learner has to hear or repeat a sound correctly. In English, for example, many learners mispronounce the 'j' sound for the 'z' sound and say "jero" instead of "zero". A close link is there between the auditory image of the word, its reading and reproduction in writing. Each word has its own auditory image, and a reader has to this auditory image should be retrieved correctly in the reading process to avoid its mispronunciation, misreading and misspelling. Some possible exercises are minimal pairs like "bit and beat", initial sounds of successive words, rhyme words, similar or parallel sentences.

Memory Training: It helps learners' in mental retention for a short but significant period of time of facts and data in a text while reading or even after reading. Some such exercises that you are likely to encounter, are: Repeat the first three sentences of the first paragraph after completing a reading. Sequentially narrate in brief the chronological order of events in a story that has been read. Name as many of the objects from memory as possible after a picture has been shown related to a story that will be read.

THE READING PROCESS

The following four steps are followed in a reading lesson:

- (i) **Introduction:** The tutor explains the purpose of reading the text given and presents a background of the information in the text. He selects and tells the meaning of the new vocabulary necessary to comprehend the main ideas in the text.
- (ii) **Reading:** Reading is an oral exercise. It involves pronouncing the words properly.
- (iii) **Comprehension Tasks:** It means setting some questions to elicit factual or inferential information based upon your understanding of the textual extract.
- (iv) **Review and Related Exercises:** These include summary, review, stylistic analysis, précis writing and other formative and summative exercises. These exercises enhance understanding. It also evaluates the ability of comprehension and identification of salient points of the text.

During a reading lesson, the following steps should be followed:

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- (i) Listening attentively to when the teacher reads the text and following the text as the lines on a page are progressively pronounced or spoken aloud.
- (ii) The teacher may highlight the meanings of words in between the reading and engage in discussion on specific portions during gaps in reading.
- (iii) The teacher reads and encourages the students to repeat, listen and read along, following the pronunciation he makes.
- (iv) The tutor elicits questions or conducts a discussion on stylistic or grammatical points.
- (v) The teacher discusses the theme and content. You all are encouraged to either read silently or practice reading aloud individually with the tutor's permission.
- (vi) Three types of questions may follow from the tutor for discussion:
 - (a) **Informative or Factual:** those which begin with what, when, where, who and how many.
 - (b) **Inferential:** Such types of questions are answered by evaluating the information given. For example, did the hero feel scared by the villain's threats?
 - (c) **Interpretative:** These types of questions relate to the author's opinion and a reader's judgement about the style and content of the text given.

STAGE ONE OF THE READING PROCESS: ELEMENTARY READING

Elementary reading is the first stage of reading in which the learners are taught the process of associating the alphabet with their relevant sounds. The learners know the relation between the individual letters and their combinations in slow and graded steps. They internalize the possibilities of sound values for each letter, or combination of letters. It leads to an emphasis on decoding graphic information from the words, phrases and sentences. With their new-found familiarity and ability to form correspondences, learners start reading new combinations of vocabulary and sentence structures. They learn to accurately predict the sound systems represented by the letters and their word formation combinations in various contexts.

Various types of elementary readers are there ranging from a child or an illiterate to an adult second or foreign language learner of English, who is not proficient in the target language. He/she may be highly educated or a moderately educated person in his/her own native language. At the starting, irrespective of age and background, the focus must be mainly on the mechanics of reading. The beginner needs learning

about the relationship and the correspondence between the letters of the alphabet and the spoken language.

Before reading skills are developed at the beginner's level, learners must note and follow these guidelines. The teacher should have adequate knowledge of the academic and linguistic background of the beginner reader or non-native speaker. The reading task involves decoding the system of abstract symbols to know its relation to the spoken language system and thus association and correspondence must be imbibed and imparted correctly. The time taken to master the practice of association and correspondence will differ with age, maturity, previous experience, and other social factors. With primary focus on mechanics, learners can excel in the mechanics of reading in a few months. Words which express familiar meanings or meanings which can be recognized, are retained in memory and thus must be chosen judiciously. The choice of words should focus on the text to be studied.

STAGE TWO OF THE READING PROCESS: INTERMEDIATE READING

Intermediate reading enhances interest in reading and develops the actual reading skill in the learner. In this stage, readers read silently and confidently predict the sound values of letters and their combinations. They start reading for academic purposes. The learners develop reading advanced English passages with the focus on overall comprehension and retention. This focuses on the development of study skills and textual organization.

At this stage, learners read the content that introduces them subtly to the grammatical and stylistic conventions of English. Learners can internalize the grammatical structures of English at this stage of reading. These structures of English are linked to the reading process and the goals of reading. For example, learners may understand through reading practice that certain phrases predict the transition in information discussed in the reading material.

The following pre-reading guidelines should be followed:

- The learner should read and examine the title and the headings for each section and try to predict what the passage will have as its central theme.
- The learner should read the first and last paragraphs. The first sentence of each paragraph predicts the focus of the passage.
- The learner should read the title and skim the passage to circle all the words that may have a connection with the title.
- The learner should scan the passage and highlight all the words that are unfamiliar.
- The learner should then do a second reading of the passage and guess or conjecture the