



NEERAJ®

READING AND SPEAKING SKILLS

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

B.A. General - 4th Semester

**Chapter Wise Reference Book
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Based on

C.B.C.S. (Choice Based Credit System) Syllabus of

I.G.N.O.U.

& Various Central, State & Other Open Universities

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QUESTION PAPER

June – 2024

(Solved)

READING AND SPEAKING SKILLS

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Time: 3 Hours]

[Maximum Marks: 100

Note: Answer all the questions.

Section—A

Q. 1. Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow:

The Diagon Alley

Vampires? Hags? Harry's head was swimming. Hagrid, meanwhile, was counting bricks in the wall about the dustbin.

"Three up... two across..." he muttered. "Right, stand back, Harry." He tapped the wall three times with the point of his umbrella.

The brick he had touched quivered—it wriggled in the middle, a small hole appeared—it grew wider and wider a second later they were facing an archway large enough even for Hagrid, an archway on to a cobbled street which twisted and termed out of sight.

"Welcome", said Hagrid, "to Diagon Alley",

He grinned at Harry's amazement. They stepped through the archway. Harry looked quickly over his shoulder and saw the archway shrink instantly back into solid wall.

The sun shone brightly on a stack of cauldrons outside the nearest shop. Cauldrons All sizes Copper, Brass, Pewter, Silver-Self Stirring-Collapsible said a sign hanging over them.

"Yeah, you'll be needin' one," said Hagrid, "but we gotta get yer money first."

Harry wished he had about eight more eyes. He turned his head in every direction as they walked up the street, trying to look at everything at once : the shops, the things outside them, the people doing their shopping.

A plump woman outside an apothecary was shaking her head as they passed, saying, "Dragon liver, sixteen sickles an ounce, they're mad..."

A low, soft hooting came from a dark shop with a sign saying Eeylops Owl Emporium—Tawny, Screech, Barn, Brown and Snowy. Several boys of about Harry's age had their noses against a window with broomsticks in it. "Look", Harry heard one of them say, "the new Nimbus Two Thousand—fastest ever." There were shops

selling robes, shops selling telescopes and strange silver instruments Harry had never seen before, windows stacked with barrels of bat spleens and eels' eyes, tottering piles of spell books, quills and rolls of parchment, potion bottles, globes of the moon... "Gringotts", said Hagrid,

"They had reached a snowy-white building which towered over the other little shops."

Questions:

(i) How would you categorize the above-mentioned passage based on what you have learned about the different types of text? Provide sound reasons to justify your response.

Ans. The passage can be categorized as descriptive fiction. It vividly describes a fictional place, Diagon Alley, with detailed imagery and sensory details. The passage uses rich descriptions to create a sense of wonder and exploration, characteristic of fictional narrative texts.

(ii) Why has the writer named this strange place Diagon Alley? Discuss.

Ans. The name "Diagon Alley" is a play on words. It sounds like "Diagonal Alley", suggesting a place that is not straightforward or ordinary but magical and hidden. The name hints at the alley's hidden nature and its function as a unique, otherworldly marketplace in the Harry Potter universe.

(iii) What is the passage reflecting on when listing down shops of Diagon Alley?

Ans. The passage reflects on the diversity and uniqueness of the magical world. It shows a variety of shops selling enchanted items, potions, and magical equipment, illustrating the rich and detailed setting of Diagon Alley. It emphasizes the bustling and intriguing nature of the marketplace.

(iv) What kind of writing genre would you categorize this passage in and why?

Ans. This passage falls under the fantasy genre. It describes a magical place with fantastical elements like spell books, enchanted items, and a hidden alley, all

QUESTION PAPER

December – 2023

(Solved)

READING AND SPEAKING SKILLS

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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—Article in the Hindustan Times, New Delhi/ Gurugram, June 05, 2022, Page 06 Delhi has long been a city of hopes and dreams as thousands head the capital's way every year in search of jobs and business opportunities. With the widespread development each passing year the stress on the city's resources has multiplied too. Now, pushed almost to the brink, Delhi has no other way but to switch to a sustainable and green action plan which works on improving its highly polluted air quality, finds solution to its depleting groundwater table, reduces the increasing burden on natural resources and finds solution to its waste problem, getting the city rid of its three garbage mountains.

The ominous signs manifested in extreme weather events can't be ignored any more. Since 2020 extreme rain and heat over several continuous months has underlined the importance of finding sustainable solution to fight the impact of climate crisis.

Since August, 2020, Delhi has registered one record weather event every month. In May, 2022 Delhi registered its highest ever maximum temperature at 49.2°C.

The rain volume is also inching up. Delhi has been receiving frequent showers throughout the year now. These spells are characterized by intense showers for a short duration. Delhi received 1512.4 mm of annual rainfall which is almost double the normal.

Waste is another challenge that needs immediate attention. According to municipal data, Delhi generates over 4 million tonnes of waste every year. More than half of it currently ends up at the already saturated three landfill sites in the city.

Landfill sites in Delhi exhausted their capacity over a decade and half ago. Besides causing air

pollution, they have also contaminated ground water. Despite this, agencies have failed to implement basic solutions, such as segregation of waste at source.

Currently, 51.7% of India's power generation comes from coal-based thermal power plants. Delhi is no different, Switching to solar energy is the sole solution towards fight against pollution. Thankfully, Delhi is seeing a steep increase in electrical vehicles.

The city belongs to its residents and any solution to implement sustainability has to be supported by the citizens by including ecofriendly ways of going about their lives.

Questions:

(a) Why do people in large numbers come to Delhi every year?

Ans. People come to Delhi every year in search of jobs and business opportunities, driven by the city's prospects for career growth and economic activities.

(b) What are the environmental issues faced by Delhi?

Ans. Delhi faces several environmental issues, including highly polluted air quality, depleting groundwater levels, increasing waste and garbage mountains, and extreme weather events such as intense heat and heavy rainfall.

(c) Which sustainable plan has been suggested in the passage?

Ans. The passage suggests a sustainable and green action plan that focuses on improving air quality, conserving groundwater, reducing the burden on natural resources, managing waste effectively, and switching to solar energy and electric vehicles to combat pollution.

(d) What harm do the mountains of waste cause and what is the basic solution towards waste management?

Ans. The mountains of waste cause air pollution and groundwater contamination. The basic solution for

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