

Revamping Reading

“L2 reading is a source of meaningful input which enhances L2 acquisition.”

James A. Maxwell, 2019



Christine McCaffrey
Specialist Teacher

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Session details

- **Benefits of reading**
- **Different ways of maximising texts**
- **Reading strategies**
- **Effective activities**
- **Narrow reading**
- **Embracing AI**
- **Zero prep**

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Revamping Reading

Reading: an under-exploited and rich resource

Steve Smith, 2023

- **Widens students' intercultural knowledge**
- **Improves general literacy**
- **Integrates with listening**
- **Boosts writing and speaking**

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Revamping reading – benefits at a glance

Rapid and efficient recognition of words

Use of grammar and vocab to process sentences

Employment of a range of strategies and thinking skills

Use of students' background knowledge

Evaluation of texts for different purposes

Texts can be processed fluently over extended periods of time

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Revamping reading – more positives

Requires vocab knowledge and rapid word recognition

Access high-quality, accessible yet challenging texts

Texts can be deconstructed through structured activities



Texts don't have to be authentic – create your own to focus on particular grammar

Language encountered can be manipulated to enhance speaking and writing

AI allows teachers to create texts with words from prescribed vocab lists

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Reading strategies



Cognitive, metacognitive, mnemonic or memory-related, compensatory, affective, social and self-motivating



Metacognitive strategies: the conscious learning strategies that oversee, direct and regulate the learning process – thinking about the learning process. Planning, monitoring, evaluating and adjusting

Reading strategies

Carol Hosenfeld's 1977 study of 'successful' L2 readers showed they do several things

Successful L2 readers

- keep the meaning of the passage in mind during reading
- read in 'broad phrases'
- skip words unimportant to overall meaning
- infer logically from 'gist'
- have a positive self-concept as a reader



Reading strategies

Carol Hosenfeld's 1977 study of 'successful' L2 readers showed they do several opposite things



Hosenfeld's unsuccessful L2 readers

- seldom skip words as unimportant
- try to translate word for word
- become 'stuck' on single words
- have a negative self-concept as a reader

Revamping reading: strategies for success



Extensive reading is most effective if we plan pre-reading activities



Pre-reading activities

- pre-teaching specific vocab
- pre-teaching specific grammatical items
- thinking into the specific context
- making associations
- brainstorming words or structures around a context or particular topic
- underlining TL words students already know
- identifying cognates
- skimming and scanning for gist and tone
- looking for negatives and predominant tense



Revamping reading: strategies for success



Digging deeper into understanding the text



Active reading activities



- true / false, not mentioned
- multiple choice
- comprehension questions
- cloze exercises
- matching sentence starts and ends
- finishing the sentence in free text
- find the synonyms
- translation



Revamping reading: strategies for success



Post-reading activities



- ID key phrases for memory chunking
- manipulate text to talk / write about students' lives
- present counter arguments: if text is about advantages, outline dangers
- read more short passages on same topic – similar vocab and structures

Follow up lessons: exploiting texts for modified output



Notes from Slide 11:

- There is still huge mileage in a good reading text in follow-up lessons to build further exposure and confidence among the students. The ideas on the slide are some tried and tested activities I use regularly which are also great for building confidence and proficiency in other MFL skills. There are many more and some of the ones I presented in last term's listening webinar double up as excellent post-reading activities.
- **Faulty echo:** this is an excellent activity for raising students' awareness of commonly made decoding errors. Display the words or phrases which produce the sounds you want to reinforce; read one aloud, correctly at a moderate pace; read the same item a second time pronouncing the sound wrongly, making sure the error is a commonly made student one; encourage students to spot the mispronunciation and say why.
- **Spot the silent endings:** display a set of words or phrases containing final unpronounced consonants; read them aloud; ask students to dot, circle or underline the letters at the end of the words which aren't pronounced.
- **Track the sounds:** read out a text with a repeated specific sound; ask the students to track as many instances as possible of the sound and to note the specific words with the sound they hear.
- **Gapped syllables:** choose a text with key target sounds to be reinforced; read the text at a moderate pace emphasizing the target sounds; students fill the gaps.
- **Break the flow:** display short sentences which follow a familiar pattern; ensure the sentences contain familiar and unfamiliar items (we are instead of I am for example); remove the gaps between the words; read each sentence at a natural speed; students draw lines between the words to indicate boundaries; read a second time with pauses between each word – this is a chance for students to change or confirm their original choices.
- **Catch it, swap it:** display a list of sentences; read them out; deliberately say a wrong word (but choose a key item of vocabulary for this); students spot this and write it down.
- **Sentence bingo:** display a list of key sentences on the board – numbered; students draw a 9-square bingo grid and choose 9 sentences (they can simply write the number); read the sentences randomly; students will associate reading with correct sounds to identify the chosen sentences. For further challenge, display the sentences in English and read them out in TL.
- **Gapped translation:** a text can be translated with key words omitted – can the students ID these in TL, gap-fill and translate them?
- **Tangled translation:** Choose a text with key words / phrases which contain key sounds; deliberately put some of the phrases in L1; encourage students to use both languages in the text to convert it all into L2.
- **Sentence chaos:** display 10 sentences on the board; put students into small groups and nominate a referee per group; the ref decides on a set order and reads out the sentences twice; players repeat the sentences in the same order. You can give players a number of lives. The player who stays alive or manages to reproduce the longest accurate sequence of sentences is the winner.
- **Delayed dictation:** this is a great one to try to encourage retention of key words and phrases. Students start with a blank page and pens down. The teacher reads out a phrase or sentence twice – once slowly, once at a more 'normal' speed. Don't allow the students to pick up their pens until several seconds have passed. In the interim, they need to be thinking about what they've heard and retaining it in their brains before finally being allowed to reproduce it on paper. It's really effective at building retention and honing focus and recall.

Revamping reading: strategies for success



Exploiting narrow reading texts:
gaining maximum mileage

More targeted post-reading activities

- spot the differences between two texts
- bad translation – spot the errors
- match the headlines – quick summaries
- provide 3 – 6 summaries and match
- select a picture and create 3 or more descriptions
- give 10 comprehension questions based on 3 – 6 texts – students ID the ‘rogue’ question





Revamping reading: strategies for success



Exploiting narrow reading texts:
involves reading several texts on the
same topic, with each text recycling
vocab and structures



More targeted post-reading activities - gaining maximum mileage

- overgeneralisations: produce statements which outline similarities in all texts except one
 - find the name of the person to whom a sentence refers
 - the most / least musical / funny / tall
 - disappearing text – challenging students to recall missing language
 - find synonyms and antonyms
 - match L1 or L2 statements with each text
- 

Revamping reading: strategies for success



Intensive reading – finding variety

- hearing the text read aloud
- reading silently
- reading aloud
- talking about the text
- manipulating language contained in the text

Intensive reading: involves working with the text in as many ways as possible



Revamping reading: strategies for success



Reading aloud: research by Gibson (2008) has shown the usefulness of reading aloud in developing lower-level processing efficiency



Reading aloud

- develops students' accurate phonological representation of vocab
- raises awareness of rhythm, stress and intonation
- significantly improves speed of silent reading
- can boost motivation
- helps with memory recall
- develops oral fluency
- develops decoding ability
- facilitates processing and vocab learning
- helps students break sentences into chunks



Revamping reading: strategies for success



Manipulating language in the text:
the more you do, the more students benefit



Manipulating language

- generates repetition
- memory for vocab
- morphological and syntactical awareness
- vocabulary knowledge and acquisition
- reading with associated listening, speaking and written tasks creates more repetitions and more chances to internalise vocab



Strategies for improving reading

Encourage recognition of text type

Examine titles and pictures for clues to meaning

Aim for gist understanding

Punctuation for clues

Knowledge of the world

Substituting L1 words

Analyse unknown words

Say text out loud

ID grammatical categories

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Embracing AI

“Clever use of AI contextualises language and equips students for the future” *Professor Kate Borthwick, University of Southampton, 2024*

Creativity with texts

Make and use a range of diverse text types

Target and include GCSE-specific vocab

Use a range of L2 AI voices to read aloud

Combine reading and listening

Include key grammar

Use a chat bot for instant feedback

Enhance motivation and engagement

ID grammatical categories

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Testing the 'right' knowledge



Question type:
Positive and negative reading

What type of knowledge is tested here?

- Ability to recognise 'un peu'
- Ability to recognise idiomatic negatives 'j'en ai marre'
- Knowledge of specific vocabulary 'cela ne m'arrête pas'



0 2

A reality TV show

You see some reactions to a new reality TV programme. The reactions are online.

Salma
Dix candidats sont envoyés dans une villa en Afrique pour trouver l'amour. Le programme est interactif, ce qui est génial. Comme beaucoup, j'ai un peu peur que ces émissions exploitent les participants.

Ilyan
Il est difficile de résister aux endroits ensoleillés et aux paysages exotiques.

Jeanne
J'ai lu que l'émission sera diffusée tous les jours pendant un mois. J'en ai marre de ce genre de choses.

Clément
Comme de nombreuses émissions anglaises, cette émission est assez vulgaire. Cela ne m'arrête pas d'attendre avec impatience de voir quel candidat va partir en rendez-vous avec une autre personne.

What do these people think about the programme?

Write **P** for a **positive** opinion.

N for a **negative** opinion.

P + N for a **positive** and **negative** opinion.

0 2 . 1	Salma	<input type="text"/>	[1 mark]
0 2 . 2	Ilyan	<input type="text"/>	[1 mark]
0 2 . 3	Jeanne	<input type="text"/>	[1 mark]
0 2 . 4	Clément	<input type="text"/>	[1 mark]

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Testing the 'right' knowledge

Question type:
Extended reading and questions in L2

What type of knowledge is tested here?

- Recognition of key French instructions
- Ability to determine which chunk of text goes with which question
- Speedy processing of synonyms
- Knowledge of specific vocabulary
- Ability to spot 'distractors'

Do not write
outside the
box

1 1

Un enfant abandonné

Lisez cet extrait du roman *Sans famille* par Hector Malot.

Un matin, Jérôme allait à son bureau en ville. Comme il passait devant un jardin, il a vu un bébé par terre ! Soudain, il a remarqué un homme. Cet homme était là pour voir si quelqu'un allait trouver le bébé qu'il avait lui-même placé sous un arbre. D'abord, Jérôme ne savait pas quoi faire mais enfin il a porté le bébé au commissariat de police.

Écrivez **V** si la phrase est **vraie**.

F si la phrase est **fausse**.

PM si la phrase n'est **pas mentionnée**.

1 1 . 1

Jérôme était au chômage.

[1 mark]

1 1 . 2

Jérôme a vu l'homme qui avait placé le bébé dans le jardin.

[1 mark]

1 1 . 3

Le bébé n'était pas content.

[1 mark]

1 1 . 4

Jérôme a hésité avant d'aller à la police.

[1 mark]

4

Testing the 'right' knowledge



Question type:
Associating statements with correct person

What type of knowledge is tested here?
Recognition of specific Spanish vocabulary
Knowledge instruction rubrics
Recognition of hinge words – 'tambien, pero.'



B Lee lo que dicen estos jóvenes.

Gloria	Para mí, lo más importante es poder sacar buenas fotos con mi móvil. También lo necesito para estar en contacto con mis padres.
Jesús	Uso mi móvil para descargar canciones. También lo uso para buscar información cuando hago los trabajos escolares.
Matilde	Yo sé que con mi móvil puedo encontrar toda la información que hay en Internet, y esto es bueno, pero también puede ser malo.
Nacho	Mis padres son muy estrictos y no me permiten llevar mi móvil al instituto. Dicen que todo el día estoy viendo los mensajes de mis amigos.

Empareja la descripción con el nombre de la persona. Escoge entre: **Gloria, Jesús, Matilde y Nacho**. Puedes usar las palabras más de una vez.

- (a) Hay ventajas y desventajas: (1)
- (b) Puedo hablar con mi familia: (1)
- (c) Me gusta escuchar música: (1)
- (d) Tengo que dejar mi móvil en casa: (1)
- (e) Mi móvil debe tener una buena cámara: (1)

(Total for Question 8 = 5 marks)

Testing the 'right' knowledge



Question type:
Extended reading

What type of knowledge is tested here?

Gleaning clues from the questions

Recognition of specific Spanish vocabulary

Key words and tenses / time phrases

Recognition of synonyms



Soy José. Después de estudiar mecánica, no pude encontrar trabajo. Pero comencé mi propia empresa hace siete años gracias a la ayuda de mis padres.

Cuando empecé fue bastante difícil. Por suerte, ahora todo es más fácil. Siempre estamos ocupados y he abierto una gasolinera al lado de mi casa.

En mi empresa, todos los empleados tienen que tener un título y poder trabajar en equipo.

Por supuesto, solo utilizamos productos de las mejores marcas. Nuestro trabajo está garantizado por dos años.

En el futuro, mi sueño es enseñar en una escuela de negocios. Espero poder hacerlo muy pronto.

Answer the questions **in English**. You do not need to write in full sentences.

(a) When did José start his business? (1)

(b) How does José know his business is successful? Give **one** detail. (1)

(c) What do you need to get a job with José? (1)

(d) How does José ensure the quality of his work? (1)

(e) What does José want to do in the future? (1)

(Total for Question 3 = 5 marks)



Testing the 'right' knowledge



Question type:

Extended text – different people

What type of knowledge is tested here?

Recognition of specific German vocabulary

Ability to recognise negatives and opinions

Speed of filtering items mentioned

Recognition of typical examiner 'traps'

0 4

Mobile phones

Read the following opinions offered by Swiss teenagers about mobile phones in school.

Write the first letter of the correct name in the box.

Write **E** for Eva.

K for Katharina.

M for Melanie.

In unserer Schule gibt es schon ein Handyverbot. Wir können das Handy mitnehmen, dürfen es jedoch im Schulgebäude und auf dem Schulhof nicht einschalten. Ich denke, man könnte Handys in den Unterricht integrieren. Die Technik können wir nicht aufhalten.

Eva

Nach den Sommerferien komme ich in die sechste Klasse und habe noch kein eigenes Handy. Ich finde es gut, dass Handys in der Schule verboten sind. Mit Handys kann man sich nicht so gut konzentrieren und könnte bei Klassenarbeiten auch davon abschreiben.

Katharina

Ich lasse mein Handy zu Hause, und so lange es da bleibt, ist das auch in Ordnung. Wir haben jetzt Tablets in der Schule und daher brauchen wir kein Handy, um Informationen zu bekommen. Ich finde aber nicht, dass man es verbieten sollte. Es ist wichtig, wenn man in Not ist.

Melanie

0 4 . 1

Who thinks that mobile phones could lead to cheating in school?

[1 mark]

0 4 . 2

Who is not allowed to switch on her mobile phone at school?

[1 mark]

0 4 . 3

Who does not yet own a mobile phone?

[1 mark]

Zero prep reading activities



Mixing it up, keeping students on their toes, maximising confidence and learning



Easy wins

- jigsaw reading: students put sentences or short paragraphs into correct order
- parallel texts: students have two versions of same text – in L1 and L2
- search the synonym
- search the antonym
- students devise L2 questions
- complete the sentence
- multi-choice questions
- summarise from memory
- gap-filling



Zero prep reading activities



Mixing it up, keeping students on their toes, maximising confidence and learning



More easy wins

- using statistics
- sequencing random lists
- design a worksheet
- reading and pausing
- true / false comprehension
- odd one out
- what's missing?



“Spoken and written language are closely connected and overlap. Therefore speaking, writing, listening and reading should be taught together, rather than as separate skills.”

“We recommend that reading, writing, listening and speaking, which are commonly used for assessments, should not be taught in isolation within courses.”



Sir Ian Bauckham
MFL Pedagogy Review 2016

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Key takeaways:

a reading lesson is much more than simply reading a text and answering questions

it is a rich source of comprehension and modelled language

- **A 'little and often' approach to reading normalises this key activity**
- **Developing a skills and strategies set for reading activities will positively impact other MFL skills**
- **Pre and post reading tasks offer a rich source of resources**
- **Plan and teach methods to tackle typical reading questions to elicit evidence of learning**
- **Gradually increase levels of challenge as confidence grows**
- **Remove supportive scaffolds**
- **Close the loop and reteach if progress is not evident**

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CPD offers

Principled Practice, Motivation and Engagement with our Grand Union Language Hub specialist teachers (Tuesday 22nd October, 9.30-15:30 in-person at Tudor Grange Academy, Solihull)

Receptive to Productive (Webinar) - **13.11.24** - 15:30-16:30

The 3 Pillars (In-person) - **25.11.24** - 9:30-15:30

Feedback form

Grand Union Language Hub
Feedback Form - Autumn Term

