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Teaching reading skills: developing students' fluency

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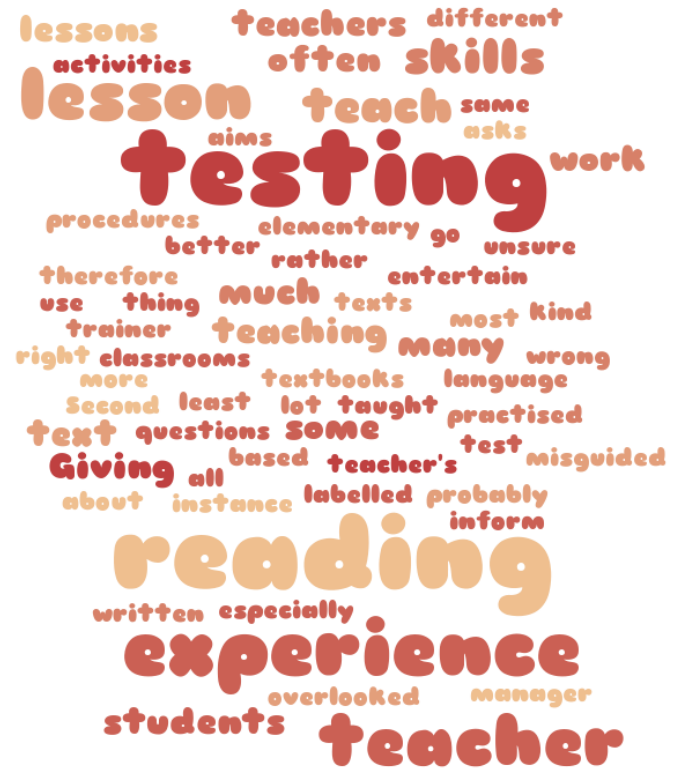
YOUNG LEARNERS

ENGLISH (16+)

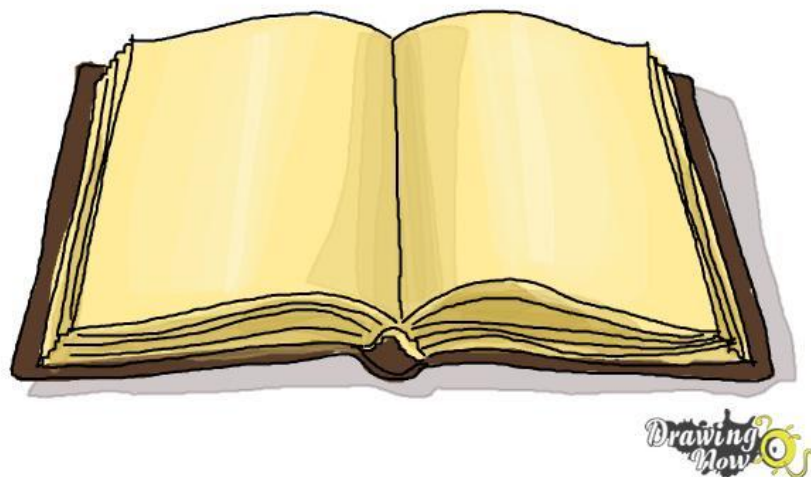
UNIVERSITY PATHWAYS

TEACHER TRAINING

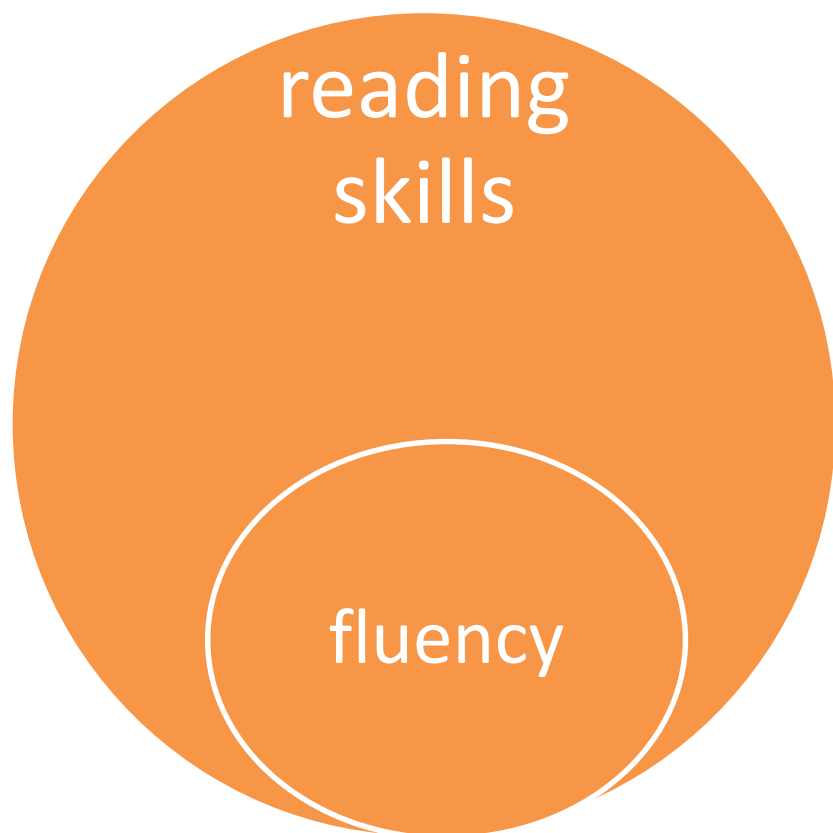
Why talk about teaching reading skills?



Why talk about fluency?

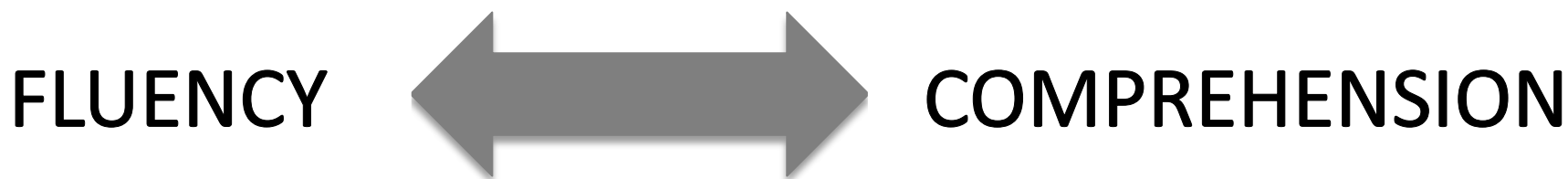


Reading skills and fluency

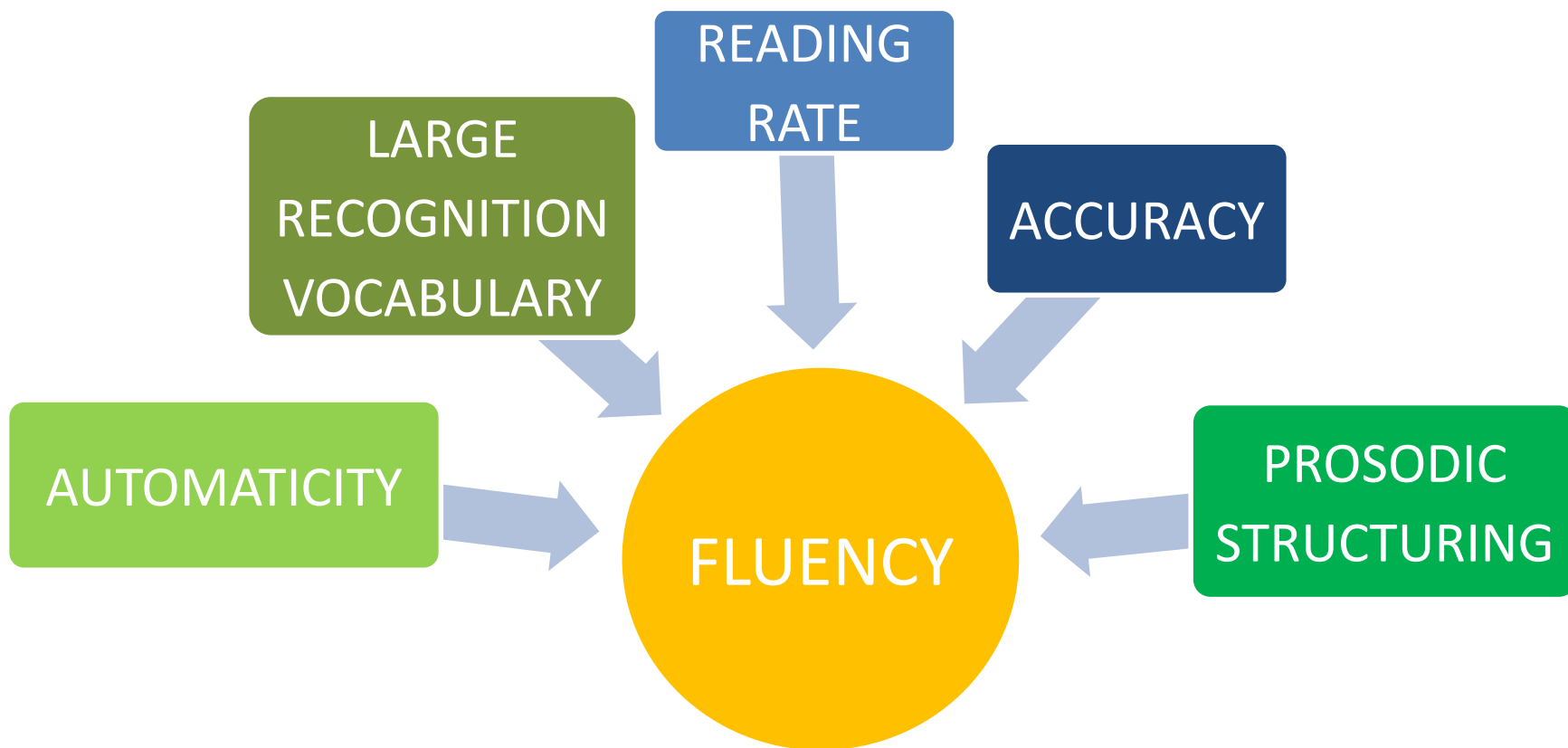


The teacher has many responsibilities. Developing fluency is only one of them.

Reasons for developing students' reading fluency



Factors contributing to reading fluency





Ways of developing students' reading fluency

- Recognition exercises
- Reading rate activities
- Extensive reading



Ways of developing students' reading fluency

- **Recognition exercises**
- Reading rate activities
- Extensive reading



Recognition exercises: Word recognition

1. well	bell	will	well	wet
2. thanks	tanks	thinks	thank	thanks
3. meet	meet	met	meat	mate
18. near	ear	neat	near	hear
19. lift	left	list	lift	fill
20. bar	par	ban	bar	beer

Number correct: _____/20

Time: _____ seconds

Recognition exercises:

Phrase recognition

Key phrase

1. by the way	by the time	by the way	on the way	by the end
2. word list	wired list	weird list	word list	wild fist
3. on the other hand	on the one hand	on the other band	in the other hand	on the other hand

...

Number correct: ___/20

Time: ___ seconds

Source: Grabe & Stoller (2011) *Teaching and Researching Reading*. 2nd edition.
New York: Routledge.

Recognition exercises: Semantic connection exercises

Key word

- | | | | | | |
|------------|-----------|----------|----------|-----------------|----------|
| 1. flower | ring | bank | blue | rose | flour |
| 2. however | often | also | but | and | usually |
| 3. solve | a problem | the bank | her home | the dinner | the bike |

...

Number correct: ___/20

Time: ___ seconds

Source: Grabe & Stoller (2011) *Teaching and Researching Reading*. 2nd edition.
New York: Routledge.



Building a large recognition vocabulary

95 – 99%

Coverage of most texts	Recognition vocabulary size
95%	10,000-15,000 words
98-99%	36,000-40,000 words



Ways of developing students' reading fluency

- Recognition exercises
- **Reading rate activities**
- Extensive reading



Typical reading speeds

Reading speed to learn 200 wpm

Relaxed reading
(average L1 speaker of English) 250-300 wpm

Fastest speed not always the aim!



Reading rate activities

- **Timed (speed) reading**
- **Repeated reading**
- **Oral rereading / shadow reading**

Timed (speed) reading

Principles of a speed reading programme

1. The **readings** should be **easy**.
2. The **focus** is **speed** (not perfect accuracy).
3. The questions should **test general understanding**.
4. Students should **not use** their **fingers or pens** to trace the words.
5. A speed reading programme should be **intensive** (daily).
6. Speed reading should be an **isolated activity**.
7. **Recording** the **time and score** is very important.



Progress Graph

Write your score in the box under the reading number. Then put an **X** in one of the boxes to show your reading time and words-per-minute.

time																					wpm	
1.00																						550
1.10																						471
1.20																						414
1.30																						367
1.40																						330
1.50																						300
2.00																						275
2.10																						254
2.20																						236
2.30																						220
2.40																						206
2.50																						194
3.00																						183
3.10																						174
3.20																						165
3.30																						157
3.40																						150
3.50																						144
4.00																						138
4.10																						132
4.20																						127
4.30																						122
4.40																						118
4.50																						114
5.00																						110
5.10																						106
5.20																						103
5.30																						100
5.40																						97
5.50																						94
6.00																						92
	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	
Score on the questions																						

Source: Quin, Nation & Millett (2007)
Asian and Pacific Speed Readings for ESL Learners



Paul Nation's website

- Vocabulary size tests
- Speed reading course (1,000 word level)

Sonia Millett's website

- Speed reading courses (500 – 4,000 word level)

Spreader

- Online speed reading training

Lextutor

- Vocabulary size tests
- Other text and vocabulary-related resources



Repeated reading

1. Student sets a modest reading rate goal.
2. Student reads a passage and times himself/herself.
3. Student answers comprehension questions and checks answers for accuracy.
4. Student records the results.
5. If the reading rate goal was not reached, student does a timed rereading of the same passage (until goal is reached).
6. A new modest goal is set, and the process begins again with a new passage.

Oral rereading / shadow reading

Sample procedure:

- Ss listen to a passage (CD or teacher)
- Ss discuss what they've heard
- Ss read silently while listening to CD again
- Ss read aloud quietly with CD
- Ss answer comprehension Qs



Ways of developing students' reading fluency

- Recognition exercises
- Reading rate activities
- **Extensive reading**

Extensive reading: main principles

- Reading materials are easy.
- Reading is individual and silent, at the students' own pace.
- Students read as much as possible.
- Students select what they want to read.
- A variety of materials on a wide range of topics is available.
- Reading is its own reward.
- The teacher is a role model of a reader for students.



Extensive reading: benefits

reading
ability

writing style

vocabulary

spelling

control of
grammar

speaking
skills

listening
skills

cognitive
development

attitude to
reading

attitudes to
L2 culture

Extensive reading: benefits

“...we learn to read by reading.” (Krashen)

“...students can develop fluency first and foremost by reading a lot, by means of, for instance, extensive reading with level appropriate texts...” (Grabe & Stoller)

Extensive reading: benefits

“The best way to improve your knowledge of a foreign language is to go and live among its speakers. The next best way is to read extensively in it.” (Nuttall)

“Getting students to read extensively is the easiest and most effective way of improving their reading skills.” (Nuttall)

Ways of implementing extensive reading

In the classroom:

- **SSR (sustained silent reading)**
- **class readers**
- **'taster' lessons**

Outside class:

- **follow-up from 'taster' lessons**
- **Reading Marathon**



THE BELL READING MARATHON

NEW YEAR CHALLENGE

8 January – 9 February 2018

**Read books in English to complete a marathon
and improve your English.**

Categories: 5 km - 10 km - half marathon (21 km) - full marathon (42 km)

Every 5 pages you read equals 1 km.

How to complete the race:

1. Borrow a book from the Learning Centre.
2. Read it (relax and enjoy yourself; don't use a dictionary).
3. When you finish a book, write an answer to one of the questions below and give it to Sarka or your teacher. Include the number of pages.
4. Your progress will be marked on the marathon map.
5. Borrow another book and continue reading!
6. Every Friday, all readers who completed one of the races during the week will get a certificate.



Write a short answer to ONE of these questions (50 words maximum):

- If you could give a present to one of the characters in the book, who would you choose and what would you give them?
- If you could invite one of the characters in the book to your birthday party, who would you choose and why?
- What would you change about the story?
- Which character is the most (or the least similar) to you and why?
- Did you read anything in your book that surprised you? Why?
- Did you learn anything new from your book? What was it?

Book: Harry Potter

I was surprised that Hermione was in Gryffindor and not in Ravenclaw, because she was the brightest pupil in the school.

Book: The Hobbit

I would invite Bilbo Baggins because he could tell me lots of stories from his adventures in Middle Earth. I'd like to hear the story about how he escaped from the trolls.

Final comments

- Many reading skills emerge as a result of implicit learning.
- Developing fluency requires thousands of hours of practice, repetition of form and process.
- Most L2 readers are simply not exposed to enough L2 print to build fluent L2 processing.



Final comments

- ⇒ Integrate reading skill instruction with extensive practice and exposure to print.
- ⇒ Use reading resources that are interesting, varied, attractive, abundant and accessible.
- ⇒ Provide some degree of student choice.

Questions?





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- Nuttall, C. (2005) *Teaching Reading Skills In a Foreign Language*. Oxford: Macmillan.



Online resources:

- Paul Nation:

<https://www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/about/staff/paul-nation>

- Sonia Millett:

<https://www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/about/staff/sonia-millett>

- Spreeder: <https://www.spreeder.com/app.php>

- Lextutor: <https://www.lex tutor.ca/>



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