

Types of English Reading for Indian College Students

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Abstract

The main purpose of reading is to understand the meaning of words, ideas, and the relationship between them in order to comprehend the given information. In most classes the teacher is the first reader. It is generally agreed that the teacher functions the guide who shows the class how to read and retrieve all the relevant information from the text that is read.

Importance of Pronunciation

When we talk about communication apart from reading, pronunciation too plays a vital role. Reading pronunciation is very important in that the reading material when read aloud will not be understood if the audience and the reader of the text do not share common and accepted reading pronunciation.

We are all aware that some speakers of the English language attract us with their good command of language, among other things; it is their pronunciation that creates the right kind of impact on us as listeners. It is very essential on the part of every speaker to speak with correct pronunciation. Since we are not native speakers of English language, there is a serious problem regarding pronunciation of the Indian speaker's English.

There are various reasons for incorrect pronunciation. In the case of native speakers, the children learn the original sounds from their childhood, which their elders habitually use; children from countries such as India where English is not the mother tongue of most people, tend to speak with mother tongue accent. Moreover we are tempted to speak English as we speak our mother tongue.

Some Types of Reading

Teachers must know the types of reading so that they may be able to choose the right type for each period of instruction. The syllabus may or may not specify the occasions and so the individual teachers should work out their own schedule of activities.

1. Loud reading
2. Silent reading
3. Intensive reading

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4. Extensive reading
 5. Supplementary reading
- Literary reading

Loud Reading

To make students read with correct pronunciation, articulation of intonation, stress and rhythm must be taken care of. The following may be our focus:

We should

1. Enable students to read with original expression.
2. Test students' knowledge of speaking words, phrases, and sentences.
3. Give practice.
4. We should enable students to understand the meaning.
5. We should prepare students for effective reading through motivating steps.

Step 1

1. A model reading is given with original pronunciation, punctuation etc.
2. Students require repetition of model reading, the teacher is the source of information.
3. Model reading helps train the auditory nerves of students.

Step 2

1. Students should read loudly.
2. The teacher should correct the pronunciation. Corrections are done only to allow students to learn further.

Precautions to be Taken

1. Loud reading should be done after model reading.
2. The passage should be up to the level of the students.
3. Over-emphasis on pronunciation of words, phrases, etc., should be corrected.
4. Mistakes should be checked.
5. In the beginning students should be allowed to read with the speed they are used to.

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6. The teachers should check the student's posture. Some may not open their mouth properly, some may be leaning onto something, some may not take the reading act seriously, etc.
7. Special attention should be given to weak students. Teachers should identify the "weak" students in terms of their skill in pronunciation, willingness to participate in class activities, rural background, etc.

Merits

If we follow the steps listed above,

1. Students learn the proper method of reading.
2. Students develop the skill of speaking and giving lectures.
3. Mistakes related to pronunciation can be corrected.
4. Practice trains various organs like eyes, ears, and mouth for learning.

Limitations

Loud reading may focus more on the reading act, not on the goal of retrieving meaning.

It does not help in critical identification of the meaning of the text.

In later life also those who do loud reading all the time may do the loud reading at work, and other places as well. And this is not a desirable practice.

If a student generally pays attention to the entire reading mechanism, it will be helpful to him/her.

Silent Reading

1. In silent reading students are asked to read a passage.
2. They are not allowed to murmur.
3. They should not stop the movement of their eyes.

Aims of Silent Reading

1. To make students read without making noise.
2. To enable them to read with ease and speed.

Steps Involved in Silent Reading

1. Teacher explains what silent reading is all about. She can give examples and models both in English and the mother tongue.
2. Students are asked to read a passage silently.
3. Teachers go in rounds and check for murmuring.
4. After giving sufficient time, simple direct questions are asked.

Note that it is always useful to have some spot checking of the progress students have made.

Suitable Time

This can be started when students know the structure of the language,

When they perceive and recognize words.

When they articulate the words properly.

When they can understand the meaning.

Merits

It is time saving.

It saves energy also.

It develops the ability.

It is useful for later life.

It initiates deeper study.

Limitations

It is not advisable for beginners.

It will not teach correct pronunciation.

It cannot be checked.

The mistakes cannot be corrected.

Sometimes students may not be able to understand.

Intensive Reading

There are of five kinds:

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1. Survey reading
2. Skimming
3. Superficial reading
4. Content study
5. Linguistic study.

Aims

This type of reading aims at achieving full understanding of the text. This reading enables the students to understand the symbolic, emotional and social overtones of the text. It enables the students to speak correctly. It improves and extends their knowledge. It makes them use English without fear. It increases their vocabulary. It fosters the study of English. This increases concentration.

Methods to be Followed

1. Teacher explains the social, cultural, political backgrounds of the lesson.
2. Some introductory questions may be asked.
3. Revision can be given.

Extensive Reading

This may also be called rapid reading which means to read silently, to read quickly, to understand the subject matter and the meaning effectively.

Aims

1. To understand the meaning faster.
2. To increase the number of passive vocabulary.
3. To develop a taste for reading.
4. To inculcate the habit of reading
5. To concentrate on the subject matter.

Advantages

It helps in the assimilation of ideas.

It keeps the whole class busy.

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It increases the vocabulary.

It has value for transfer of learning.

It paves the way for individuals to study.

Supplementary Reading

It is the same as extensive reading, but this is usually done outside the classroom to acquire more knowledge in any subject. This aims at developing reading habit in students and to benefit from available variety of resources.

It follows the same procedure as extensive reading.

Library Reading

This is also like supplementary reading. It is not supervised reading; it is done in informal situations, and it is private reading. It provides enjoyment in addition to imparting knowledge and information.

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